THE COMMONWEAL

A Weekly Review of Literature, The Arts, and Public Affairs.

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WHAT SHALL THE LAYMAN DO?

ONE of the most satisfactory things in connection with the establishment of this journal, has been the number, variety, interest and importance of the letters of dissatisfaction which we have received. For believing as we do that hardly any spiritual or mental condition is more deplorable than indifference, every such letter has been a fresh and welcome proof of stimulating and creative concern with, and interest in, our work on the part of our readers. As Mr. Heywood Broun remarked in another connection the other day, it is only by the letters an editor or a writer receives, that the effect of the written word can be measured. As The Commonweal approaches the end of its first year, the increase of such letters both in number and in value, is a highly gratifying fact. We beg our readers to continue to coöperate with us in this most practical fashion.

But even more important than the letters criticizing The Commonweal, have been the many letters from correspondents throughout the country expressing dissatisfaction, not with The Commonweal, but with conditions and circumstances connected with the Catholic Church itself. We hasten to add that of course we do not mean letters expressing dissatisfaction or discontent with the religion of the Catholic Church, or with its moral and spiritual discipline. Letters of that kind do reach us, of course, but not from Catholics —only from critical or hostile non-Catholics—usually cranks or fanatics. What we do mean is that many letters reach us, calling attention to what the writers deem to be deficiencies or omissions in the methods or instrumentalities by means of which the influence of the Church is spread abroad among its members and throughout society in general. It is because these writers are true Catholics, loyal, and zealous, and desire nothing more ardently than the extension and strengthening of the socially beneficial forces of Catholicity, that they write the kind of letters to which we refer.

Many of these communications we have published —and we propose to publish others from time to time. Some are sent to us, not for publication, but for our guidance, instruction, or to throw light upon some condition to which the writers desire this journal to turn its attention.

Several letters of the type to which we are referring are printed in this issue of The Commonweal. We call the attention of our readers particularly to the

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letter of Mr. William Franklin Sands. It differs from many others, not in the zeal of the writer for the advancement of the true interests of the Faith (for that zeal is shared by all the writers we have in mind) but it differs by reason of the fact that Mr. Sands passes by the details and particular things dealt with by them in favor of fundamental aspects of the great problem, inseparable from the existence of the Catholic Church in a country like the United States; and also in the fact that he proposes the undertaking of a far-reaching and thorough survey of the factors of that problem.

Mr. Max Steuer, one of the leading lawyers of New York, when asked by the New York World to express his opinion of the speeches made by Mr. Charles Evans Hughes and Attorney-General Sargent, concerning the reform of our present deplorable situation in the field of law enforcement, makes remarks which are highly pertinent if applied to the subject under discussion now. He calls attention to the fact that the speeches of Mr. Hughes and the Attorney-General are only two of the most notable of many utterances, repeatedly given forth, year by year, in season and out of season, and that for the most part they deal with general principles upon which all law-abiding and patriotic men and women are in agreement. But such utterances rarely propose practicable measures by means of which the desired reforms may be effected.

So it is, it seems to us, in the matter of more effective Catholic social action, and the obtaining of what so many of the letter-writers to whom we refer have in mind, namely—the encouragement of effective Catholic lay leadership in those fields of Catholic action where the layman may properly be active, and the bringing about of a harmonious coöperation between Catholic lay activities and ecclesiastical authority, supervision, and inspiration. The Commonweal is not the only journal in which these problems are discussed. All the leading Catholic periodicals are dealing with this matter, and were doing so long before The Commonweal came into the field. And what all these journals publish is only a fragment of what is being said by men and women who do not write letters to the papers, but who are greatly concerned that the Faith, which to them is the guiding light of their individual lives, shall be enabled, through effective organized means, to shine forth for the benefit of the whole community—for non-Catholics as well as for Catholics.

This week there will be held in Washington several important conferences where this problem will, we feel sure, receive that sort of consideration which will tend towards its solution. We refer in a special way to the annual meeting of the Archbishops and Bishops of the United States in connection with the affairs of the National Catholic Welfare Conference; and to the meeting of Catholic laymen, including members of the executive committee of the National Council of Catholic Men—one of the departments of the National Catholic Welfare Conference. One hundred representative Catholic laymen have been invited to attend this meeting, the direct purpose of which "is to discuss the advisability and feasibility of continuing the effort to effect the organization of the Catholic laity of this country."

The call to this meeting, from which we have quoted, goes on to say that "a decision in this matter is of such grave importance that it is felt the Catholic lay leaders of the United States ought to be consulted, and if possible, offered an opportunity to express their views in the premises."

It is, we think it safe to say, a matter of general knowledge that of all departments of the National Catholic Welfare Conference, the National Council of Catholic Men has been the least satisfactory in bringing about results commensurate with the high hopes with which the council was founded and the lofty ideals set before it. If this be true, the fact nevertheless reflects no discredit upon those who have been entrusted with the guidance of the National Council of Catholic Men; but it does indicate that the difficulties which the council has encountered in its effort to organize and direct the activities of Catholic laymen, are of the most serious nature. The aims and purposes of the National Council of Catholic Men differ from those of other organizations among the Catholic laity—such as the Knights of Columbus, for example—in that these aims and purposes are directly supervised and guided by the bishops themselves, through delegated authority, and were meant to secure a more thoroughly unified action among Catholic organizations than seemed feasible through any other means; and also to inspire and bring about the expression of this nationally united Catholic unity in ways hitherto not attempted, although thoroughly consonant with Catholic traditions and philosophy.

It hoped Catholic laymen would take a more active part in the study and solution of the great social problems of our times—such problems as the unnecessary yet increasingly bitter struggle between capitalistic wealth and class-conscious labor; or the ever deepening menace of pagan principles and customs as they affect family life, art, literature, and legislation; or the great international problems involving the destinies of all mankind.

In the joint pastoral letter of the American bishops, issued when the Catholic War Council became the National Catholic Welfare Conference, these high hopes and great aims were fully and authoritatively ex-

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pressed. They were laid before the various Catholic organizations, whether grouped within the National Welfare Conference or pursuing their own work in their own way, as the compass, and also the chart, of their multitudinous activities. That this work, at least so far as the Catholic laymen are concerned, seems to have reached something like an impasse, must make all sincere Catholics gravely anxious that some practical means be discovered to solve this problem. What seems to be necessary before such measures can be devised is to determine just what types of work, in the general field of expressing Catholic principles in social and intellectual channels, may be left safely in the hands of laymen, and which types require the active superintendence of the clergy. In spiritual and moral matters, of course, the clergy are the sole responsible leaders of the Catholic body. All social and intellectual activities necessarily stem from, and are only to be safely guided by, the spiritual and moral principles held and guarded by the ecclesiastical authority of the Church.

It would perhaps seem to follow from this that all forms of Catholic social and intellectual organized effort should, therefore, be directed and governed by the clergy. But are there not many forms of social and intellectual work in which laymen, fully accepting spiritual and moral guidance, are (simply because they are laymen, and hence have forms of experience only partially, if at all, open to the clergy) much better fitted to devise and direct the practical means and ways by which these principles may be fruitfully expressed?

We are of the opinion that both the clergy and intelligent laymen concur in giving an affirmative answer to this question. The Commonweal is not alone in its hope that the bishops, meeting in council in Washington this week, and the representative laymen also meeting there, can go a long step further than mere agreement on this matter, and that they will begin to clear up the confusion that now exists and to define those ways in which Catholic lay action can become a reality, instead of a vague or merely oratorical phrase.

Readers of Nicholas Nickleby may remember that when Mr. Squeers, the master of Dotheboys Hall, asked his class to spell window, and got the answer "w-i-n-d-e-r," he accepted the answer as being good enough for practical purposes, and said—"All right—now go and clean it."

Even if at this time only a faulty or imperfect answer is possible to the question of what is the proper field for Catholic lay activity, it is surely desirable that the laymen should set actively to work and at least clean the windows, so that more light may be let in upon the subject.

THE COMMONWEAL

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WEEK BY WEEK

IN addressing an appeal to former La Follette supporters, the Socialist party of New York City stresses the fact that it is the only political organization covenanted to support the federal child-labor amendment. This is interesting, because it recalls the strong sources of opposition to that amendment when it came before the states. Doubtless there are manufacturing districts where children work in factories, but the outspoken hostility towards the law came from the farms. Perhaps the only time that Wisconsin really doubted the wisdom of Senator La Follette was when he challenged so fiercely the "interests" which wished to exploit the young and helpless. The far West had in Senator Borah a vigorous opponent of the amendment. Farmers simply could not stomach legislation which threatened to interpose the hand of the state between them and the work which little William or Susan might do about the place. And indeed, the figures now published by the National Industrial Conference Board show that 80 percent of children under fourteen who are gainfully employed, live on the home farms.

OBVIOUSLY, the problem is a thorny one. A law prohibiting the use of child labor in factories would be wholly wise; a law interfering with milk pails and chores might be quite unfortunate. In the first place, country families are normally larger than city families; work in the open air is not only healthful on the whole, but is an excellent preparation for the profession of agriculture; and the profits of farming are small enough as it is, without the possible burden of

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youthful members of the family group restrained from lifting a hand. In the second place, the average farmer has not yet come to see the relation between his own welfare and general civic progress. His schools are primitive places which give a few months to the three R's. Unfortunate though this may be for the rising generation, the difficulty will hardly be settled by urging federal legislation. The remedy, when it comes, will be one of the fruits of active, intelligent agricultural leadership which can promote coöperative and civic ideals.

THE publication of income-tax returns may be indiscreet but, as the disillusioned say about fishing, it has its good qualities. It is informing to note that each of some twenty-five organizations paid the government over two million dollars in gratitude for favors received during the past year. For the most part these gigantic fortunes were made in catering to the progress of modern civilization—in motors and the oil they consume, telephones, cigarettes, cookies, cans and ten-cent store bargains. Those who regret the concentration of wealth to the extent indicated by the tax returns are, perhaps, engaged either in labor or in one of the cultural pursuits which never feed the federal budget anything very substantial. But even these can hardly avoid admitting that such gigantic figures are a significant testimonial to the general national prosperity. A public which rewards most highly those who supply it with products that are additional to the staple necessities, is not a public in need. In this case, the very concentration of wealth indicates the wide distribution of wealth. There is, however, another aspect of the situation in which many can find refuge. An America which crowns so regally those who furnish its cookies and its outings has no excuse to offer for the destitution of professional servants. If librarians and investigators, teachers and custodians of the public safety, are those who perform the most essential services to the democracy, then only a malevolent cynic could gaze at the gilded lists supplied by the revenue office without a qualm of conscience or the first symptom of a good resolve to do all possible to better their condition.

COMMANDER RODGERS has come safely ashore with a cheerful crew and a fairy tale. For what else is his narrative of peril at sea but a story of modern marvels in an old, wide world? Like an albatross weak with hunger, the PN-9 No. 1 (what a name, gentlemen!) fluttered to the waves and drifted to an island. Boys and men with any meat on their bones would give shirt and socks for a strong adventure like that, and for the rugged grit which brought the happy ending. This is an age of peace parleys and addresses by Professor Beard. But through it there comes—and necessarily so—the sound of Roland's horn, speaking of danger and high bravery. Commander Rodgers is a person all of us are interested in because he affords a healthy and unmistakable sample of that manhood which, when everything has been said, guarantees the nation's integrity much better than money or words. His plane is also of some importance. The attempted flight does not prove much about anything excepting that the vessel was ship-shape, dependable and well-manned—details which restore confidence to the public mind and do the service no harm. Failure to reach Hawaii implies that aviation is dependent upon weather and fuel to a far more hazardous extent than any other form of transportation. But the uses of flight are so great and manifold that, even if the risks cannot be much reduced, aeronautics will increasingly control the sea and the land. Wherefore all of us are vitally interested in seeing that it is put into the right hands.

SIGNS are not wanting to show that Europe is at least on the verge of dispensing with America's "moral leadership" of the world. The preliminaries to the conference on the Security Pact, the addresses at Geneva, and various other circumstances indicate that the aftermath of war has proved the necessity for using whatever machinery of coöperation is available. In all likelihood, the French government will hold out for a disarmament conference under the auspices of the League; and should President Coolidge issue his proposed invitations to a similar conference in Washington, he may discover an indifferently attentive world. We hail the success of the League; but we do not feel that this good news necessarily strengthens the case of those who bewail the absence of the United States from official Geneva. Much has been said about the possibility of our being drawn into European armed conflicts; something might also be whispered about the danger of immersion in European political and economic differences.

M. PAUL BONCOUR'S celebrated speech about the protocol and the "rule of justice on earth" is, when calmly analyzed, demagogic hot air by a person with a gift for shaking his head. The whole thing is just as convincing as the three words so familiar to users of French coins. We should hesitate to voice a desire that American delegates be confronted with the task of choosing between M. Boncour and Mr. Chamberlain. The result might do us little honor and no good. Under the prevailing arrangements, Europe will probably arrive at the conclusion that, far from being a community of archangels, we are a large nation with multitudinous problems all our own; and that her revival will depend, not upon the alliance of some peoples with us, but on European solidarity. This the League alone is capable of assuring, and therefore all Americans will endorse the League. But we doubt very much if a United States delegation—probably composed of prosperous and static thinkers of the

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old school, little trained in European problems—could use its time more profitably in Switzerland than by visiting Lake Lucerne and patronizing the best châlets.

WHATEVER may be thought of the rights of small nations (we are not hearing so much about them just now as in the roseate year that followed the Armistice) there is no doubt their sensibilities are acute. Press reports from London, where a play named Taffy is satirizing peasant life in "Welsh Wales," tell of an outbreak of indignation among the audience, largely composed of compatriots of Mr. Lloyd George living in the metropolis, that makes the scenes witnessed in Boston and New York during the performance of Synge's famous Playboy of the Western World seem gentle and urbane criticism. Hisses and cat-calls were not the only or most potent weapons employed. "Patriotic Welshmen," we are told, "grouped themselves together and sang Welsh anthems." Only those who have been privileged to hear Land of My Fathers intoned in chorus during an international football game at Cardiff or Newport, will realize how complete a barrage song can be made by the sons of the Cymri when they are in deadly earnest.

WHAT must add considerable bitterness to the feeling among loyal Welshmen at this satire on their race, is the fact that the offending author, Mr. Caradoc Evans, is blood of their blood and bone of their bone. Born at Llandyssul, in Carmatthenshore, of humble parents, his talent as a forceful writer was first recognized by the London New Age fifteen or twenty years ago. A foretaste of the criticism that has now descended upon him was seen when his studies of peasant life in remote districts in Wales were published in two books, Capel Zion and My Own People. The picture they paint is that of a primitive folk, immersed in the sordid details of life, their existence darkened and haunted by a sombre Calvinism, cunning and hard-hearted in their dealings with one another, and prone to violence and moral lapses. As in Zola's La Terre, there is every indication that the sombre colors are overloaded. But what makes the studies particularly painful reading to those who know the Irish and Breton peasant, is a sense throughout them that something is missing which tempers the harsh impact of materialism for the other two great branches of the Celtic stock, and that the faith that illumines toil and casts the rainbow veil of hope over the harsh outlines of destiny, should have been filched from this gallant and tenacious people by a monarch of their own race 400 years ago.

THE letter of the rector of Christ Church, Elizabeth, New Jersey, to the New York Times on the subject of the Anglican church generally, and of Mr. P. W. Wilson's article on the crisis in the ranks, published two weeks ago in the same journal, is a surprising document, both for what it admits and what it denies. Dr. Fish is not the only loyal member of the Episcopal communion to feel a humiliation in the very disreputable origins of the Reformation in England, and naturally strives to belittle the part played by Henry VIII's wandering marital eye in the great change. That "Henry was right in law," Catholics have never admitted. Upon his motives, character, and the probable causes of his childlessness, the late Dr. McLaurin, of Sydney University, has written an illuminating chapter. While to describe a revolution in beliefs and practice which entailed the scrapping of five sacraments out of seven, and the parody in common parlance of "hocus pocus" for the most sacred words of Catholic ritual as "a detail of change of detailed administration, and non-essential teaching and practice," certainly strikes one as very special pleading indeed.

DR. FISH mentions as one of the main reasons for dissatisfaction among the High Church party in England, "the spectacle of Protestants and non-Christians dealing with ecclesiastical matters, and a non-Christian Prime Minister appointing bishops." From the indignation which he and those who think with him feel today, he may deduce the feelings of men of the ancient faith 400 years ago, who saw the historic fabric delivered over without hope of appeal to the headship of a man whom Charles Dickens has described as "a spot of blood and grease on the pages of English history," and its monuments demolished to make manor houses for his favorites. One of the weaknesses of the Episcopal Church in America is that it is forced, willy-nilly, to follow the fortunes of the parent church in Britain, which is, quite simply, reaping the fruits of the Erastianism that presided over its beginnings. Many Catholics think they perceive in the course of events, a providence at work that is drawing the Church of the Catacombs and the Church of the Cavaliers more and more into one another's orbit, and they hope and pray wholeheartedly for some clear issue that will save their separated brethren from the humiliation and confusion that have descended upon them. But upon the means by which such an end is to be attained, and on the way that escape lies, their conviction is as clear today as it was in the second spring of the Oxford Movement.

THE county of Waterford, a place where so many names recall the leaven of Norman blood which reached Ireland in the thirteenth century by trade and settlement, has always stood for a certain solidity and common sense, and its chief city was a fitting stage for the striking speech by Archbishop Mannix on the occasion of his receiving the civic freedom of the old seaport. The reception tendered to the patriotic Irish archbishop from far Australia, and which was at-

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tended by "persons of every shade of political feeling," amounted to a positive "amende honorable" for the unfortunate incidents associated with his name during the war. The patriotic prelate made it quite clear that his feelings on the complete independence of his country had not altered. His plea for political peace and "better mutual respect among those who differ politically," was all the stronger for this, and the enthusiasm which greeted it is a good augury for the future.

ECHOES that come from the North are of varying quality. At Cavan, which is in Free State territory, Grand Master McGarvey, of the "Royal Black Preceptory," roared as gently as any sucking-dove. His statement that "we are no worse off under the new régime than we were under the old," may seem faint and ungracious praise, but coming from a quarter where religious and racial tolerance has hitherto been about on the level of the Ku Klux Klan, it is not devoid of significance. As a contrast, the Orange drum was thumped with all its old vigor at Derry, where a certain "Mr. Moles, M.P." loudly asserted the determination of his fellow Ulstermen not to yield an inch on the boundary question, regardless of the decision to which British faith is pledged. And the matter was put still more tersely when Mr. Grant, his fellow member in the ill-mannered parish council at Belfast that has been dignified with the name of parliament, challenged the South to "come and take it if you can." There is no great need to comment on the statement. Americans whom prejudice does not blind, will see in the contrast between the tantrums and war-dance in the Ulster plantation, and the statesmanlike language at Waterford, a pretty fair indication of where the merits of the case lie.

THE day of set discussions on religious topics seems to have passed, and we may feel thankful for it since it is doubtful whether such things ever effected anything but the stirring up of rancor. Yet there was a time, not a hundred years ago, when people flocked in thousands to hear Pope, the Protestant champion, go for Maguire, the supporter of the Catholic faith; and Maguire go for Pope, on behalf of their respective beliefs. The Scopes incident seems to have brought about such a contest on the topic of evolution in the Queen's Hall, London, between Messrs. McCabe and Price, with Earl Russell as chairman, whose career is well known to most people on both sides of the Atlantic. Mr. McCabe was once, as Father Anthony, O.S.F., a friar in Killarney; but he abandoned that order and his religion, and became an active member of the Rationalistic Press Association—an energetic and well-financed organization which earns a considerable income, it is believed, by the issue of works like Haeckel's Riddle of the Universe. It was, in fact, as the champion of this organization that he appeared in defense of evolution. Naturally he never had any serious scientific training, and anything that he knows about the subject must have been picked up in the course of his reading and writing. He has been a most prolific author as well as a translator of many books.

MR. GEORGE McCREADY PRICE, M. A., the opponent of evolution, hails from this side of the Atlantic. He was, until recently, professor of geology in Union College, Nebraska, and is known also as a writer on the subject which he taught. Dr. O'Toole, who evidently thinks well of his ideas, quotes him freely, yet admits that "all orthodox geologists have long since anathematized him, and outlawed him from respectable geological society. Charles Schuchert, of Yale, refers to him as 'a fundamentalist harboring a geological nightmare.' " A discussion on such a subject (with lantern slides) by such men and with such a chairman, must have been indeed something worth listening to.

THE recent convention of the medical mission section of the Catholic Hospital Association, held at Mount Saint Vincent, New York, was a notable instance of the advancing interest on the part of Catholics in all good works. Non-Catholic mission societies look upon their medical work as their most valuable adjunct in spreading their principles among non-Christian peoples; but to date, Catholic missions have, for the most part, been very poorly equipped in this regard. In consequence, the health of very many zealous heralds of the Cross has broken down, and not a few have succumbed to easily cured ailments simply because no competent medical help was available. Looked upon therefore, in the cold light of an investment, medical equipment on the missions pays. But when it is considered from higher points of view, it becomes not only desirable but imperative. These higher points of view are two—first, there is the betterment of conditions under which human beings are compelled to live. We in this country have small conception of the squalor and misery which are the common lot of the multitudes in, for example, many parts of Asia and Africa. The terrific rate of infant mortality, the sad lot of women, especially as concerns their bearing and raising of children, the frightful suffering caused by unskilled and superstitious treatment of diseases, are things that we, who are happily spared, understand only a little.

A MISSION which has for its purpose the amelioration of these conditions, must appeal to all (even those who do not profess a religious motive) on the sheer ground of its humanitarianism. To the medical profession, moreover, it makes its appeal (again regardless of religious convictions) in its efforts to fight such things as typhus, bubonic plague, leprosy, and a host of less known, but equally pestilential, scourges

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which are almost endemic in tropical lands. Yet there is a still higher point of view—that of showing forth the charity of Christ, and by means of the relief of suffering, of leading souls to seek in Him and His Church healing for their souls, as well as for their bodies, and health for eternity as well as for time. The signal success which has attended Catholic missionary work will, unquestionably, be greatly enhanced, once the missions are adequately equipped from a medical point of view. The work of the Medical Mission board lies in its efforts to bring about such an equipment. It should enlist the support of everyone whose heart is touched by human suffering, and even more of those who see in service to their fellow-man, a means of showing forth the Divine love which spared not the Son of God in order to redeem mankind from the thraldom of death.

A NEWS-DESPATCH from a city on the Hudson River, brings a simple story of danger and rescue which is more than usually impressive. Sister Mary Assumpta and Sister Mary Immaculata, disregarding the fact that their heavy habits made swimming difficult, plunged into the stream to save three little girls, whom an unavoidable accident had swept into the current. Their bravery and their success in winning back the precious young lives has been widely applauded. It is gratifying to see how quickly the good act was brought to the attention of the many. And yet, for women of this type, applause is the least necessary aspect of existence. Labor in a spirit of love, for motives far above those which actuate men of business or adventure, is their aim and their promise of the reward.

AT this season, when the schools are reopening and files of little ones go dutifully about, the sisters deserve a special remembrance. There are ever so many problems connected with education—methods increase in number and perplexity, people insist upon saddling upon the teacher's shoulder a larger psychological responsibility, and changes in equipment and housing must be arranged for. The sisters worry a great deal about these various difficulties. They are entitled to vastly more assistance than they get in solving educational problems. A helpful word, a kind deed, are rewards which they accept, with an enthusiasm unknown to lesser mortals, as magnificent contributions to the fund of energy, loyalty, and religious earnestness which is basic to their work. What would we all—no matter of what creed—do without the sisters? This thought once occurred to a "rich old sinner" (at least so he termed himself) while visiting one of the hospitals of the Orient. The result was a subsequent substantial decrease of his wealth. In any case, Americans who are in daily nearness to such events as that reported from Nyack, have no excuse for overlooking those who figure heroically in them.

MORE LIGHT FOR LABOR

IT IS one of the central difficulties of our time that minds which reflect studiously and seriously upon problems of government and society, are almost necessarily cloistered. Time is quite as essential as genius to the man or woman who would really know something about human life in the aggregate, or express that knowledge in effective words. Our democracy, for the most part, is made up of laboring men whom a lack of leisure and training often places at the mercy of glittering reformers' nonsense, or utterly baseless Utopian dreams. How can we get in touch with this democracy? How can we help it to assimilate the social wisdom of our tradition? In the first place, we may, of course, develop the intelligent synthesis of thought and action, of faith and charity, which is really our mission to contemporary men. Secondly, we may think of founding an adequate democratic pedagogy.

The social action department of the National Catholic Welfare Conference may fairly claim to have weighed both aspects of the problem. Its books and pamphlets set forth the Church's teaching about the economic and political tasks of man. Now it is attempting to disseminate that teaching. A study-club outline, for use in parish group meetings during the winter months, has been prepared. The subjects include topics most widely discussed by those interested in present-day capital and labor—wages, insurance, unions, housing, cost of living. An excellent feature is the modified Socratic method which has been introduced into the outline—questions are asked which bear directly upon the personal experiences of working-people, and which may be answered either from experience or from a few simple references, such as the Bishops' Pastoral Letter. In this way, if the meetings are properly conducted, it should prove easy to show a great many citizens how every-day living is bound up with economic theory and with the moral doctrine of Catholic tradition. "The outline is more like an examination of conscience than a study-club program," states the N. C. W. C. Bulletin.

Nothing could be more important than the introduction and use of such methods. The Encyclicals of the great Pontiff were written for the benefit and guidance of working-men; they are too frequently banished to the realm of theory and studious ethics. Recently a working-man wrote to someone noted for his addresses on the subject of economics—"One can't help seeing how very, very small is the number of educated Catholics who protest against unfair or distressing conditions in contemporary social life. There are far too few inside the Church who come to districts where working-people live and talk with us as man to man, or show us a little understanding. And nowadays you can't get the ear of a poor fellow unless you show that you are in sympathy with him." Many conclusions might be drawn from this simple document. Let us give some attention to one.

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It is characteristic of the American poor—particularly those whom immigration has recently brought to us—to reverence education. They want it for their children, and they regret having missed it themselves; but most of all they concede the educated man's right to give counsel and assume control. Can we afford to squander the opportunity latent in this attitude? Those of us whom the training of mind and eye has given a relatively deep insight into the laws and structure of society, have no finer chance to amount to something in this world than is afforded by the opportunity to join hands with the social action department of the National Catholic Welfare Conference and win over crowds to the doctrine of Pope Leo and his disciples.

THE PAPACY AND PEACE

CONCORD between peoples, prevention of war, social reconstruction—these goals, recognized by all men as fundamental to the welfare of our own and future generations, are the constant objects of what may be termed papal diplomacy. The great war convinced the world that Pius X and his successors were, in a magnificent sense, custodians of conscience and masters of charity. But though many governments have been led to establish or reassume diplomatic relations with the Vatican, the public knows little about what has been the actual character of the Pope's endeavor. Fortunately, a German student of history, Friedrich Ritter von Lama, has begun to publish in a series of little books what will be a complete account of the international effort of the Holy See. His work has official approval and is especially trustworthy because it is based on documents placed at his disposal by the Curia. The Commonweal will, therefore, publish brief résumés of von Lama's work as it appears.

During the course of the war, the Holy See was necessarily obligated to the difficult task of maintaining absolute neutrality. Often it seemed to the Catholics of various countries that their church was showing favor to the enemy—a conclusion to which a protagonist is almost always brought by a display of genuine impartiality. But every document in the case proves anew the rigid aloofness of the Papacy from nationalistic enthusiasms. For instance, the letter of Benedict XV, dated November 8, 1918, characterizes the Italian victory as "fortunati successi;" if this be translated, as it frequently was, as "fortunate successes," an implication of rejoicing would be given; but the Italian word "fortunati" means "caused by fortune." Of course there were occasions when the Papacy might have attempted to right a moral wrong without violating neutrality. The fact that such occasions could be seized only seldom is accounted for by von Lama in a searching study of the well known clause in the London Agreement which pledged the support of England and France to Italian opposition to "every proposal tending to introduce a papal representative into any of the negotiations for peace, or for the settlement of questions raised by the present war." This clause, of course, barred the door to papal diplomacy.

Italy demanded such an agreement because she feared the Roman question might come before a peace conference for settlement. Her pre-war liberal leaders, Sonnino particularly, would brook no modification of the status of 1870. During the course of President Wilson's visit to the Vatican, in 1919, many papers supposed that he would be asked to urge the Holy See's case at Versailles. Of course he was suffered to depart without having been embarrassed with any such request; but the fact that he had come, that various other rulers called at the Vatican, and that the diplomatic representatives of many nations were in attendance there, brought about a profound modification of the whole issue. In the first place, Benedict XV conceded a point and authorized official visits from crowned heads and presidents; in the second place, the newspapers of Italy began gradually to assert that the arrangement of 1870 ought not to stand and that the Roman question must be settled anew. Such a settlement has not, however, been arrived at as yet.

The most sensational matter taken up by von Lama in his first section is the treatment by the German Chancellor, Georg Michaelis, of the preliminary peace parley which the Holy Father transmitted to Germany at the request of the British ambassador to the Vatican. It will be recalled that this parley asked three questions—what reparations Germany would make, what guarantees of future European peace would be offered, and whether Germany would agree to the liberation of Belgium with appropriate indemnities. There can be no doubt of the official character of the invitation. Ribot agreed to it, in the name of France, because he feared the possibility that his country might have to carry on the conflict alone. But though the parley was presented by the papal nuncio in Munich, it met with evasive answers only. It has since been made clear that Michaelis, though his emperor had urged manoeuvering for peace and had ruled that Belgium was to be restored inviolate, did not mention the papal letter to the German leaders. Ludendorff did not hear of it until the war was over!

Why did Michaelis wreak this cosmic blunder? Because, says our historian, using ample evidence to sustain his contention, Michaelis was the representative of those who treasured the ancient antipathy of Protestant Germany to the Vatican and its mission. He was requested—during that year of the Luther anniversary, in honor of which he wrote an eloquent manuscript, "not to get entangled in the devil's yarn." He and his Evangelical Bund could not take even peace from the hands of the papal "Anti-christ." The inference is therefore clear. It was the Holy See which labored for Germany's weal and the world's peace—and it was, in all probability, the German Chancellor who added another holocaust to the catastrophe.

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MR. PAGE AND THE WAR

By HENRY LONGAN STUART

THE Page letters to President Wilson, written from London during the first few months of war, a further instalment of which is given us by Mr. Burton Hendrick in the current issue of the World's Work, are something more than a footnote to history. Mr. Hartley Grattan, who busies himself in this month's Mercury with rubbing off a little more of the gilding that has accrued on what he terms the "Walter Hines Page Legend," does not seem to have had them under his eye when writing his very able article. One need not agree with Mr. Grattan's conclusions, which are extreme, far less prejudge the vexed question of responsibility for the outbreak of war. What does strengthen, as we read these very amazing human and diplomatic documents, is a feeling that Mr. Page, temperamentally and constitutionally was about as ill-fitted a man as fate could have destined to represent the interests of the one great neutral nation during a crisis that would have tested the most heaven-born of diplomats.

It is hard to define the perfect ambassador, or to lay down in what exact proportions of iron hand and velvet glove—"suaviter in modo" and "fortiter in re" —he should possess the traditional equipment of successful diplomacy. Two things at least are obvious. He should be a man with a very single eye to the interests of the country he is representing. He should be immune, when occasion arises, from any sophistries, no matter how skilfully applied that strive to pull wool over it. That Mr. Page was a patriotic American, no one would be absurd enough to deny. That his eye was a single one, might be claimed. But it was often single at the wrong time, and when its fellow should have been kept very wide open indeed.

Both eyes were, as a matter of fact, hypnotized from the beginning by a vision that comes to nearly every American of English blood who visits the "old home." It lies in wait for him in the twilight of Westminster Hall and Abbey, it lurks in the cloisters of Oxford or Cambridge, and in the chancel of Stratford-on-Avon church. It is the vision of a common Anglo-Saxon destiny, a perspective so infinite that the Revolution and all it implies sinks to the level of an incident. Page was not the first American ambassador or minister to the Court of St. James to be star-speaker at dinners or meetings where pious platitudes are uttered by class-conscious pilgrims. But he was the first to whom the chance was given to translate them into diplomatic action or inaction. Whether he deserved well of America, time alone will show. We need not wait on time to be sure that in England—to use his preferred term where the British empire was in question—his merits will not soon be forgotten. If he indeed died a martyr, the most fitting place for his monument would seem to be not so much the country that gave him birth, as the country to which he was accredited.

From first to last it is plain that he was under the spell of Sir Edward Grey. At the end, it would have been hardly an exaggeration to say (using the words of a former famous speaker of the House of Commons) that he had "neither ears to hear nor eyes to see," save as the present Viscount Grey saw or heard. His intellect was not of very tough or aristocratic fibre. It was fascinated, as a woman's might have been, by the figure of this gaunt, aloof, stricken statesman. The patrician name impressed his social sense. The Liberal label was a salve for his democracy.

The letters published in the World's Work teem with references to Grey. It is July 29, 1914. "At dinner he was the same sad figure, saying little, absorbed, waking up once in a while with a smile and then slipping back into silence. After dinner there was music, and he sat in a corner of the room—alone. He folded his arms and mechanically kept time with his foot, of course, not hearing the music or anything else." Is this, we ask ourselves, the ambassador of the United States sending home to his Executive information that shall guide the nation's course in a world crisis, or a magazine writer, taking notes to incorporate into a feature story that shall wring the withers of the public in a popular magazine?

That Walter Page's imagination should have been impressed by what he heard and saw in London during the last three, awful months of 1914, is excusable. But his identification with certain tendencies that his perspicuity perceived lurking in the background, and only waiting on victory to assert themselves, is less easy to explain away. Such a cry as—"These are the fellows who will take Berlin!" (September 22) may be pardoned. It is a typical utterance, coming from a mind of what the French call the "affectif" order, which catches the mob spirit even when the mob is someone else's. From the same facile enthusiasm comes the prophecy, which time was to refute rather dismally, that Jellicoe will go down in history as another Nelson—French, as a second Wellington. But there are other sentences where shrewdness and sentimentality are so intermingled that it would take a psychologist to disentangle them. Intelligence is forced to admissions which the will to believe denatures and robs of their logical force. There are moments when the vision of a great peaceful nation entering the perilous paths of war induces a sob. There are others when there is almost a chuckle over what looks to this observer like its choice of a good

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moment. "Look at their diplomacy!" (the admiring words are wrung from Ambassador Page on September 22) "Sir Edward Grey was heart-broken when he could no longer keep peace. But, when war came, Russia and France were already engaged before England went in; and yet it is primarily a war between England and Germany." As early as August 2, he could detect "in English opinion an acquiescence, almost a satisfaction, that war between England and Germany is now certain . . . It is better to have it now when Germany will have other enemies in the field—better, too, when the responsibility for starting it lies at Germany's door."

How far did Page's conviction that whatever England did was for the good of the world at large hamper his efforts for peace? We know that efforts were made. But will anyone now believe that they were as persistent or heroic as a man less the hostage of his hero-worship might have made them? Why indeed should they be? "I do not yet see any way (this on July 29) for England seems to me to be doing everything that can be done." England—in which four days later the ambassador thought he noted "almost a satisfaction" that war was certain.

Mr. Hendrick, in his comment as editor, reminds us that many of the letters were written under great strain, when British aid to France and Belgium was dubious, and when "national dishonor" impended. But throughout the letters there is scant reference to hapless France, to invaded Belgium or to the peril threatening western Europe. It is England's danger, England's opportunity, England's eventual chance of a firmer grip on a bigger empire that is Page's preoccupation. It is to be, under God's providence, "an English—not a French nor a Russian victory . . . These English are the only people in Europe who have the habit of success." A firmer basis, too, for that aristocratic society so grateful in the nostrils of this southern Democrat. The British leaders "will be made peers; they will receive great residences and large grants and their families will become great families in the realm . . . The story will be the story of English freedom again saved and again broadened, of the empire become bigger . . . of India become really loyal and far better treated, of new African colonies to exploit."

A "broken-hearted" foreign secretary—at one end of the war and "new colonies to exploit" at another. Here is a conjuncture that, in French phrase, "makes one think furiously." It is not challenging Britain's right to the mandates which the war secured her nor impugning the general beneficence of her rule to suggest that a system whose spokesmen could convey impressions so diverse and yet so timely, one upon Mr. Page in London, the other upon Mr. Wilson at Versailles, may well have acquired "the habit of success."

THE DANGER OF SAFETY

By NELSON COLLINS

THE United States Supreme Court decisions of 1923, in the Nebraska foreign-language case, and of 1925, in the Oregon compulsory public schools case, have given exceedingly ample protection to vital American principles. The court has asserted that great masses of our population shall not be recklessly disciplined by others. That makes it all the more imperative that their development shall be carefully disciplined by themselves.

I have no patience with two-thirds of the talk about 100 percent Americanism. I used to hear it in connection with ships' crews, and now I hear it in connection with churches and schools. I think the first three chapters of Michael Pupin's From Immigrant to Inventor, are more valuable than 75 percent of the Americanization pamphlets. These are the chapters in which he tells of his ardent new relation to the United States, undertaking to prove his Czecho-Slovakian excellences to his fellow-citizens of other strains. But there is a balance to be struck in these matters, and to me the great usefulness of the two decisions of our highest courts, is that they leave the attaining of this balance to inner development—not to outer compulsions.

There is an Americanization problem. But its true agents are not those satisfied to "shove 'em through the mill" in a hurry, veneering Americanism upon them. There are two problems, the result of the two decisions, which should be solved by those concerned and not by outsiders. One is the problem of giving the state its full legal and moral part in the education of every child, allowing it to have its chance as well as the parent and the church. The other problem is giving the English language and American idea ample scope early in the life of the child.

There is a danger now that these two court decisions may lead, especially in isolated districts, to assertiveness of moods that responsible administrative groups never have countenanced. The danger is not only from Catholic populations. It may not be even mainly from Catholic populations. Nor is it from any right pride of inherited traditions or blood qualities. It can only be from an over-development and an over-assertiveness of these.

The possible danger among the Lutherans, among the responsible Lutherans at least, is not so much in the assertion of their Germanic prides and inheritances. Rather it is from the fixed article of belief in Lutheran

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administrative tradition that not only no control, but no affinity, shall exist between the church and the state. It is a little hard to follow their extreme development of this admirable standpoint. Men are citizens, even while they sit in church. Children are candidates committed to citizenship, even while they sit in school. The state shall not dominate the schools, we know now, but it shall have its rightful assertiveness there, in all of them. This interplay of the state with the parent, the church, the child and the teacher is a problem that here and there, in reactionary or careless corners, may prove to be a Catholic problem—but from the very nature of Lutheran administrative principles it is much more of a Lutheran problem than it is a Catholic problem.

Within the Catholic Church the situation affects especially the Polish population. It is curious, but I think it is true that with legal victories won, the language case, as fought through by the Lutherans in 1923, is more apt to have Catholic reactions; and the compulsory public schools case, as fought through mainly by the Catholics in 1925, is more apt to have Lutheran reactions that need self-scrutiny—the sense of danger within ourselves, just because we are so safe at last. The same cause that somewhat depressed the German language in the United States has exalted every Pole's sense of his language. It was the war. The re-birth of glorious Polish nationalism has led to renewed emphasis in the minds of our Polish citizens on every thing that has to do with Poland. I have known and admired that mood. I had occasion to say in the Atlantic Monthly in 1920, after I had gone into Kiev with Marshall Pilsudski's Polish army and on the way back met so many of the Haller's army men—

> The best of Poland and the best of the United States was in these men. It made one just a little tired of excessive talk about speaking an inherited foreign language necessarily making a worse citizen of the United States . . . I would like to trade these men with their deficiencies in our language and with their fighting mood of United States citizenship, for some voluble English-speaking citizens I know . . . They thought in Polish of their love for, their identification with, America.

Out in Michigan I was directed by two Catholic bishops, when it should become convenient, to have a look at Presque Isle county, the educational "black spot" of the state, with a greater percentage of illiteracy than any other county in the state, and with a large Catholic population, predominantly Polish. There are two or three little towns in the county and a good many farms, but most of them isolated one from the other. The main roads are good and the side roads are travesties. "Find out what is the matter up there," said the bishop within whose spiritual domain the county lies. "I doubt that you'll find Posen as bad as you have heard."

Posen and Metz lie within a few miles of each other. Krakow is not far away. Posen has no public school at all. It is like Mount Angel, Oregon, in that. There would be no children to attend the public school, supposing it existed. They are all in the parochial school attached to Saint Casimir's church, which lies a mile outside the village.

"I said Mass at Metz a few years ago," another bishop of the state informed me. "The altar boys who served the Mass for me couldn't say 'Our Father;' or 'Hail, Mary,' in English or Latin—only in Polish. I asked the sisters why they didn't alter that; but they gave me no satisfaction."

In the schools campaign, Presque Isle county had been made more or less notorious from soap-boxes, rostrums and pulpits as the acme of ignorance. "Something is the matter up there, I suppose," I said to its bishop. His wave of the hand deprecated any discussion. "Find out for yourself," he said again.

So I went, asking myself—"Is it a Catholic something that is the matter? Is it a Polish something that is racial and not religious? Is it neither of these, but the helpless result of Presque Isle county being the most isolated county in Michigan, most isolated from all the other counties in the state, most isolated one part of it from another, one 'settlement' from another, one farm from another?"

I found out. And both its excellencies and its insistences come to me now as I think of the barely possible dangers there are in our so amply assured present legal safety.

Except for the Catholic parochial school at Posen, "truly a praiseworthy but a perilous adventure into the field of popular education," as Charles W. Eliot called the whole Catholic parochial school system recently, elementary education in Presque Isle county, Michigan, would be considerably worse off than it is. The fact is, the compulsory school law does not work in Presque Isle county with any completeness, and it functions less in the public schools of the countryside than in the parochial schools. The farm homes of these children are isolated one from another by bad stretches of by-roads, lumpish ways of worn corduroy in many cases. Not all the king's horses and all the king's men, not all the school-bus tractors and contractors in the United States could dig these children out of their remote farm homes and haul them to school each morning and evening in the dead of a north Michigan winter. Gasoline doesn't know how to do it, and horses know too much to try it. In the fall of the year the children stay home picking potatoes out of the hills; in the spring they lead the ploughing horse along the turning furrow. Compulsory education falls down in Presque Isle county, excepting in its three villages.

To overcome this condition, Saint Casimir's parochial school has dormitories. Children come from the countryside, seventy-five or eighty of them, each Monday morning and join the children of Posen village. They are kept until Friday afternoon and then go home for the week-end, each to an isolated farm.

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They pay for this food and shelter. If parents bring in the set amount of meat and vegetables, there is no charge for the meals; if the parents prefer not to send the food, the charge per child is a dollar and a quarter a week! The children sleep in airy dormitories with white sheets and pillow-cases, and the tick full of good goose feathers over them. The charge per child is ten cents a week. The county commissioner of schools later remarked to me that this parochial school turns out better pupils for the state eighth-grade examination than any other school, public or parochial, in the entire county.

These Polish children sang me Robert Louis Stevenson's poem about going to bed by candle-light; but they folded their little hands still standing at the laden tables and recited their prayer of anticipation and thanks to the Lord, in Polish.

"Now why is that?" I asked of their pastor. "It cannot be a pedagogical matter. I have heard them recite and sing many more things yesterday and today in English than in Polish. The prayers the Church requires of children would not fill two pages of their readers. Why don't they say their prayers in English, Father?"

"They will be none the worse citizens for saying them in Polish," replied the pastor. "Fathers and mothers like to hear their children's prayers in the inflections, the very tones they used for their own childish prayers. Grandfathers and grandmothers want it even more earnestly. There is no harm in that. When they are eighteen or thereabouts they can use English for their prayers, if they feel that is the thing they want to do. We have been admonished by the bishops about it. We could not hold our people, I tell you frankly, if we accepted the bishops' admonitions as a command. I myself want to hear their confessions in the tones I used to confess in as a child. The priest who comes after me here, one of these young blades now in the seminaries, probably won't feel that way about it. Yet I will have no man question my Americanism. A divided family cannot stand. That is truer of prayer than of anything else. There is time enough for any change that has to come. Prayer will change last."

I thought I understood his problems after that evening's conversation, and certainly I respected his citizenship. I had spent two days seeing his task and the task of the sisters there in promoting elementary education for the citizenship of the United States. I saw the resourcefulness and the economy with which they did it. They had children eight and nine, and several ten, making up the first grade. The children's English was not up to par for their age, even if it was for their grade. But, then, their Polish was not up to par, either. These children lived under almost all the handicaps. They knew their English, if anything, better than their Polish. And the children in the higher grammar grades knew their English very well indeed. Certainly I understood the statesmanship of the bishops in thinking of such matters only in terms of three generations. The highest national court has refused to regard as a legal problem, either the study of a foreign language in the elementary grades, or the fact of these children being in a parochial school instead of being in the isolated public school of the country roadside up there. These are problems profoundly committed to the populations affected.

Their own progress, their happiness with their neighbors, their best service to their chidren, will all be best achieved, surely, by giving readily in the fullest sympathy to the state, also concerned with their children, its participating share. The state has given all the guarantees asked of it. There is no mood of take all and give nothing in any of the populations thus sustained by the state in their dearest demands. That must steadily be made evident. We need to be overanxious to have it apparent. Haste is these matters must be made slowly. That is always the only sound mode of making profound adjustments. It is only necessary always to make sure that this slowness shall be the inevitable appeal to time, and never careless or reluctant delay.

Mammon Passeth By

Little daughter, creep closer;
In the tamarisk bushes hiding,
Creep closer.
As the rushing mountain wind,
As the eagle from its crag,
As the snake strikes from the grass,
His chariot sped on;
Bearing his pine-torch
(Flame is his bond-slave)
Wheeling his sword of light
(Darkness rides after him)—

Ai, ai,
What can we mortals do?
Daughter, creep closer;
Let the night hide thee.

Little daughter, be silent;
Lest thy whisper find him,
Be silent.
All the dearest of thy love,
All thy hope, and all thy joy,
All the life from out thy heart,
These will he steal away.
Casting his circling net
(Sure is the fowler's snare)
Blood on the axle-tree
(Hark, how the stricken wail)—

Ai, ai,
What can we mortals do?
Daughter, creep closer,
Let the night hide thee.

R. R. Macgregor.

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FATHER TABB AND HIS TRADITION

By GEORGE N. SHUSTER

A NATIONAL literature is always the naughty child of tradition. And tradition in the United States is commonly supposed by both its friends and enemies to have been tossed like a parcel from the Mayflower. Few seem to realize that there has been another great composite American past—a legacy of attitude and experience as well defined as anything which ever came out of New England. Suppose we remember, for instance, all that was done by Catholic and Latin civilization in America—the Jesuits of Louis Quatorze tramping from bayou to wigwam; Spanish cowls bright and soft against the first olive groves of California; Creoles dancing through Mardi Gras in Louisiana; the stand made by Lord Baltimore—and the Irish, too, by the way—for freedom. Group with this everything which the Anglican memories of the South have meant—faith and ruffles of a gracious stamp; Sir Philip Sidney come to life again in Robert Lee; and even the flash of sabres in the moonlight, which is summoned up by Stuart's name.

If any one man seems to be the interpreter of this romantic tradition, echoing with his voice its thousand moods and making room in his heart for the things it reverenced, it is Father John Bannister Tabb. In him the fugitive notes of a myriad scattered songs came to their places as in an octave. Grant that Poe was greater and gave America poetic literature, to date, its pinnacles in Ulalume, and The City in the Sea. But Poe is representative only of romanticism, wearing the cloak of Coleridge and Mangan with a new majesty, and scanning the dead face of beauty on which Shelley never dared to look. Grant also that the influence of Father Tabb has been small—the tragedy of the United States is precisely the limited attention which anyone, not in the Puritan movement, has been able to get. Poe himself was canonized in Europe, and the vision of Sidney Lanier has been overborne by The Vision of Sir Launfal in Mr. Lowell's rhymed prose. We have reason to wonder, not at the smallness of Father Tabb's kingdom, but at his having any kingdom at all.

The fundamental impressive thing about his poetry is its agricultural and patrician character. Like Virgil, he trained his eyes on the broad acres of his domain. Nature is the constant background of his song—a nature courted in regal leisure, the poet's hand stroking the stars as a lover smoothes his mistress's golden hair.

The poetry of the romantic tradition in America is like a limb from the same tree—though a new and sappy limb. Who is more like Keats than Lanier? Who is the American Shelley if it be not Poe? Such is the lineage of Father Tabb, not merely because of individual choice but first of all by the proud reason of his race.

An agricultural and patrician race, this. The more one comes to know of Father Tabb, the more certain it appears that he could only have been his kind of American. A dozen characteristics which seem oddities prove upon inspection really representative of the folk to whom he belonged. First, there was his independence—not the ordinary "have-my-own-way" kind of temperament, but the sterling isolation of the principled rebel. In Father Tabb's case, of course, this independence was by no means merely political. It stained every-day life with colors much less prim than conformist white. There was, for instance, his power of shrewd satire, which cut and stabbed into the dead-level with unerring ability to detect softnesses. His blows fell swiftly and left their mark, so that many contemporaries felt Tabbian phrases "stick fast in the throat like burrs." The fervent intimacy with nature which Father Tabb reveals throughout his work is his very own—it is an art of whistling a way into the woodland, of treating all creatures blithely and yet with reverence. But it is not in the least Franciscan. The Water-Lily, for instance, makes this comparison—

> Nay; methinks the maiden moon,
> When the daylight came too soon,
> Fleeting from her bath to hide,
> Left her garment in the tide.

Obviously that is no note of Assisi, and the sample is characteristic enough. Where the tone of Father Tabb is predominately reflective, you will almost certainly find a metaphor shaded with peculiar whimsicality. Thus he speaks of the golden-rod's "lifted staff;" the rain is a truant, "sorry to have gone with the mist that lured him on;" and, to choose a last example, the warblers have "their phonograph, the mocking-bird." Where his tone is chiefly moral—often enough the case—our poet moves not so much from the laws of nature to the law for man, as out of reverie into contemplation. In this mood, The Sisters finds an equal blessing for Martha and Mary in the movement of waves and the rest of hills; Wild Flowers suggests that the Eucharist is God's dew upon us; and in Westward, love bears suffering for the beloved as night lifts shadows from the day. Everywhere the metamorphosis of the impression given by nature is effected in the fashion peculiar to the poetic family to which Father Tabb belonged, though with added whimsy. Nature must be wooed into poetry, let us say; but in the caresses of Father Tabb there is always a teasing gesture.

Nevertheless he was utterly simple of heart, and

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sensibly serious. The story of his religious life, which developed out of the war and was molded by the delicate far-off fingers of Newman, need not be told here. That he made a sacrifice of his career by joining the Catholic priesthood and observing its rules, was the natural result of his reticence and humble thoroughness. The melody of the Catholic revival entranced him like a tribal song. The import of his verse was modified in consequence, and he folded his hands whenever he saw the face of beauty. He was certainly not a singer because he was a priest, although I think that without anointed hands he would hardly have reached his destiny as man or artist. Those hands taught him to hold life solemnly, tenderly. They brought him strangely into union with a brotherhood of seventeenth-century poets of whom he knew practically nothing.

Such then is the man—a staunch independent with a rapier sheathed in his thought; a lover of home, knowing the hills and every voice upon them; and a priest of goodly sacrifice who continues the old quest of his race for prayer and mystical belief. Ever so much more should get into the portrait—his friendship, loyal enough to risk perennial fun; his strong human bias ("with respect to his poetry he was as vain as any woman could be of her beauty," his biographer confesses) the almost tragic loneliness of his blind old age; and, among literary quiddles, his violent devotion to Keats. But all these lesser things were his alone. The others he shared with his ancestry, in the honest American fashion. Inevitably his poetry is expressive of himself, and so of his people. "We who speak are really not ourselves," says Hermann Bahr, "it is the blood of our tribe that speaks through us."

Now, as to the utterance of Father Tabb's verse, let us be willing not to find it all upon the surface. He had pride enough to be shy, and sufficient courage to believe his readers willing to knock twice at his door. But there was not a whit of the highbrow in his soul. What poetry he made was always purely human—the themes it took were everybody's. His speech, however, is elusive, intuitive, amatory. He loves, but whispers his affection; he knows the charms of beauty but lifts her sacred veil only under the moon; he looks deeply into the eyes of earth and so has scant need of explanations. A glance, an outcry, sometimes a kiss—thus does our poet woo the soul of the universe. Always there is fundamentally only God and man, though they may meet dimly on the "lonely mountain" or in the "school of darkness." How could he have made all this thin and commonplace, or stretched its swift ecstasy into odes? Father Tabb built no mountains; he could only climb them.

Reverent and wild, kneeling loftily, what does his verse resemble so much as a sprig of pine cast into an incense burner? In the spiral of its ascending song there is no exotic odor, even if the fumes are sharp and lingeringly sweet. Our poet keeps the essence of his sacrificial rite, as if he were some hermit seer lost in the Virginian mountains, and dispenses with the graces of festival or the rich concourse of robed assistants. Joy and pain clutch together at the blazing thought, as rain and sunshine are woven into a tree. Numberless little things, spurned so wearily by the restless, become once more the fuel of a song. Like every true poet, Father Tabb saw the magnificence of the microscopic. He did not always succeed at expression; indeed he often resembles a boy striking matches in the wind. But when he did enkindle radiance, the humblest simplicities of life went climbing towards the sky, for their wedding with the Infinite.

Of such quality is the poetry of John Bannister Tabb. Sometimes too elfish, too obscure, or too badly spotted with wilful phrasing, its unfailing virtues are pure spontaneity and deep reflectiveness. His songs are born indeed, and not made; but they seem to have come into the world with a full cargo of wisdom. In At the Year's End, he says—

> Night dreams of day, and winter seems
> In sleep to breathe the balm of May.
> Their dreams are true anon; but they,
> The dreamers, then, alas, are dreams.
>
> Thus, while our days the dreams renew
> Of some forgotten sleeper, we,
> The dreamers of futurity,
> Shall vanish when our own are true.

The mood is, indeed, as old as the earth, but I do not believe any other poet has voiced it in quite this same way, finding the perfect circle which can wed together man and nature in a throbbing thought that lives and pulsates.

The Old Nun

Bowed at her prie-dieu, fingering her beads,
  She kneels, or quavering in the choir she sings
Sonorous Latin as the organ leads
  Skywards the psalm. Though with it her spirit wings,
She understands but vaguely the words she reads.

She has no learning save in the deep skies'
  Profundities—in simple faith and hope
And candid love, that makes the simple wise,
  And innocence that holds within its scope
Joy, and sheds tenderness upon the eyes.

Adoring at the altar in the dim
  Light of the winter dawns, her soul goes free,
No longer bounded by the world's small rim,
  But yearning to her approaching God as He
Kisses His bride, and draws her close to Him.

So waits she for her end—the happy night
  When she will hear the singing round her bed
Of salve, as the darkening room grows bright,
  And she goes forth, the youngest of the dead,
To life eternal and eternal light.

THEODORE MAYNARD.

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JAMES ALPHONSUS McMASTER

By ANNE EASBY-SMITH

A MAN of whom Maurice Francis Egan, looking back over forty years, could write—"My chief had been a veritable thunderer," and on the same page could add—"the most sympathetic husband and father possible. . .he adored his children and they returned his adoration;" whom Cardinal Gibbons called "brave defender of the Faith," and Archbishop Ryan—"the truest man I have ever known," is a character interesting alike to the students of history and of psychology. Few men of his age had more enemies—few more admirers—and in each group were to be found men of power. A life of James Alphonsus McMaster could not be written without compiling a history of the Catholic Church during the forty years in which he edited the Freeman's Journal. Editorials were a really influential factor in those days; at least in the 'fifties and 'sixties and far into the 'seventies—and this alert, aggressive editor, like a skilful pilot, detected far or near the slightest danger to the faith he loved, and too often careless of the feelings of others, sent out trenchant warnings to every point of the compass.

Few out of the millions who knew McMaster had any idea of his antecedents or of his inner self. Born at Duanesburg, New York, in 1820, Benjamin Brown James MacMaster was named for two grandfathers. He was the youngest of seven children. The Reverend Gilbert MacMaster, proud descendent of Scotch Covenanters, gave his children every educational and cultural advantage. A gentle and tender mother added the needed human touch which made the home perfect. All the children seem to have responded to their father's ideas of education, but the youngest surpassed them all. At the age of four he earned the reward of "something nice," promised by his mother, by learning by rote the Sermon on the Mount; at five he was the happy possessor of a Latin grammar; and he began to study Greek at eight. He was an insatiable reader at ten, and his sister Helen tried in vain to find a passage from Shakespeare that he could not place. The Bible was equally familiar to him at this time. These stories account in part for the well-trained memory, the wealth of vocabulary, the rich and wide background so evident to the readers of McMaster's mature work.

Other incidents reveal the characteristic traits of the man. Admitted to the bar, a brilliant future seemed to await him, when he suddenly gave it up because he won a case in which he had become convinced that his client was guilty. His sense of honesty became alarmed.

The cold tenets of the religion of his fathers became intolerable to this ardent spirit, and he became an Episcopalian. His father promptly disinherited him. We find McMaster at the Protestant Episcopal Seminary, in New York City, in the early 'forties, with Clarence Walworth and Arthur Carey. The former, fifty years later, wrote of McMaster as of one "born to command." The history of the Oxford Movement in this seminary is interesting. James McMaster was a source of anxiety to the authorities. It is doubtful if he would have been ordained even if he had insisted, for he had not the tact nor the patience which enabled Arthur Carey to pass the rigorous examination to which he was subjected before his ordination; and besides, McMaster's logic was impregnable and his courage unquestioned.

True to his practice of thoroughness, McMaster devoured Saint Thomas's Summa and the Catena Aurea, until the tone of his mind became more and more Catholic. Pride alone held him back from joining the Church. This was overcome at last by what McMaster always considered a special grace obtained for him by the Mother of God. In spite of the fact that he had written some remarkable things about her greatness and glory, he had never been able to bring himself to pray to a woman. One day he read an unusually beautiful passage in one of Saint Ephrem's treatises, and he exclaimed—"Oh, if I could only pray to you!" Then mastering himself by an effort that caused him to break out into a profuse perspiration, he cried—"I will!" From that moment he never hesitated, and afterwards always called himself "Our Lady's bad boy." He loved to think of himself as a knight of Our Lady. Maurice Francis Egan, after McMaster's death, writing of the many who would mourn his loss, said—"They know him as the soldier of the Cross, as a Godfrey de Bouillon, the knight without fear and without reproach, always ready to strike for the honor of Our Lord and His Immaculate Mother, Mary."

Father Rumpler, the rector of the Redemptorist convent on Third Street, was a man after McMaster's own heart. When the quondam theological student asked to be received into the Church, Father Rumpler presented him with the penny catechism, saying—"If you are in earnest, I will instruct you. If you are not in earnest, stay where you are, for you will be worst damned as a bad Catholic." When McMaster came back with the entire book learned by heart over night, he received the answer—"What you learn so quickly, you will forget as quickly; come back next week!"

While the fervent convert was reading his profession of faith, candle in hand, he set fire to the hair of Father Tschenhen, one of the assisting priests. He remarked afterwards—"It will be a pity if I don't set fire to something more!"

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Such was the man who broke with kith and kin and all the friends of his youth for the sake of the faith he so passionately loved. Only the privileged inner circle knew of the wealth of affection in that vigorous soul, a tenderness undreamed of by the crowd who saw only his vehemence and strength.

Soon after his conversion, with Clarence Walworth and Isaac Hecker he set out for the Redemptorist novitiate in Belgium, hoping to join that order to which all his after-life he was devoted; but this was not to be. McMaster took his disappointment regarding his vocation with characteristic impetuosity. When the far-seeing master of novices told him that his calling was not to the religious life nor yet to the priesthood, but that his talents pointed unmistakably to a career of great usefulness to the Church as a journalist, he cried—"I would rather pick rags!"

Once convinced, however, that this was true, he set out to prepare methodically and zealously for his life's work. He found in the beautiful and gifted Gertrude, daughter of Gilbert Fetterman of Pittsburg, a truly valiant woman whose rare talents and perfect culture made her the idol of his household, and a true helpmate. McMaster later found himself a widower with five children, and devoted himself to the task of being father and mother to these bereaved ones. Their life-long loyal devotedness best shows how he succeeded. John Alphonsus, the only son who grew to manhood, did not share McMaster's literary gifts, but they were good comrades, and it was affecting to see the loving manner in which this son nursed his dying father. None of McMaster's children married. John died in Chicago in 1915. The three girls were educated at the Convent of the Holy Child, Sharon Hill, Pennsylvania, where their father was a constant visitor, for he never considered himself exempt from a parent's responsibility.

One by one, his daughters heard the Divine call, and embraced the religious life. Mary, the eldest, entered the Holy Child Society in 1877. She is the only surviving daughter. Helen, the youngest, became a Carmelite in Baltimore. Last of all, Gertrude who had hesitated to leave her father alone and had kept her secret until he, divining it, insisted on her following the call of God, entered Carmel. Her father accompanied her to the door of the convent, and to show his desire to participate in her sacrifice, lifted her over the threshold. In later years his daughters attributed their happiness and the success of their lives to the early training and influence of their father.

Old Saint Peter's on Barclay Street today is thronged with worshippers, especially at the noon hour, when the Most Holy Sacrament is exposed. When McMaster edited the Freeman's Journal it was not so. He and Mr. Farrelly and others paid pious old women to remain all day in the church so that it could safely be left open and they be able to visit their Eucharistic King. I have never been in this church without thinking of the "brave old Catholic warrior," as Doctor Moriarty called him. Doubtless McMaster's visits to the old church became more frequent as his life became more lonely. He called his home "my hermitage." Daily Mass became a necessity to him, and his charity to the poor increased. Maurice F. Egan said that the secret charities of McMaster kept him always poor. Monthly visits to his daughters in their respective convents were his greatest joys, and nothing can exceed in spiritual beauty his letters to them.

McMaster's death was a fitting close to his life. On the feast of the Annunciation, 1886, he had made a solemn consecration of himself to the Mother of God, at Carmel in Baltimore. The sweetness of that day seemed to permeate the remaining months of his life. He died in the same year, on December 29.

During the forty years of McMaster's editorship, Archbishop Hughes, Cardinal McCloskey and Archbishop Corrigan in turn occupied the see of New York. All three trusted McMaster entirely. The Journal gave its fullest support to all movements of interest to Church and country. Archbishop Corrigan said that McMaster was the father of the parochial school system. A dart hurled at the Church brought down on the offender unmeasured denunciation. McMaster's powerful intellect, his profound erudition, and the happy faculty he possessed of saying the right word in the right place were the despair of his opponents. No wonder he had enemies! Like all impetuous and generous natures, the end desired was so impelling that the means, provided they were legitimate, mattered little. He was impatient of compromise, intolerant of ignorance, indifferent to consequences. To him, fearless and loyal by temperament, hesitation and diplomacy seemed weakness, and too often the strong epithet left an open wound where more tactful means might have produced beneficial results.

In spite of this, the greatness of the man was recognized by those who understood his nobility of character. This was clear to all when the old warrior died From every corner not only of the United States, but of the world of letters, poured into the offices of the Freeman's Journal, letters containing amazing tributes to the memory of the dead editor—letters which proved that age had not dimmed his prestige. The leading papers contained articles of a similar nature. Perhaps Monsignor Edwards's words best sum up McMaster's work—"I consider that J. A. McMaster was the best champion of the Church in this country... He never wavered but was always ready to sacrifice all to the cause of religion. He was a fine, ripe scholar and a writer of rare force and clearness."

There are few people who are aware of the fact that McMaster changed the spelling of his name when he entered the Church, because he thought the Irish more Catholic than the Scotch. I have often thought that was a sacrifice that cost him much—for his people were proud of their ancestors.

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THE SIN OF CREDULITY

By STANLEY B. JAMES

A BOOK on the American criminal* gives some disturbing facts and figures as to the extent to which the public is annually robbed by fraudulent methods. But when I closed the book I found myself more impressed by its revelations of human credulity than by its account of criminality. The prevalence of the "sucker" is as depressing as that of the criminal. Perhaps it is true to say that the former accounts in some measure for the latter. The demand creates the supply. Given a number of persons almost asking to be swindled, and there will be no lack of those willing to oblige them. The credulous must bear at least part of the blame for the crook. Modern sentiment has confused gullibility with simple-mindedness. It represents the saint as a very naïve, childlike person willing to be taken in by anyone who cares to attempt the job. Faith and credulity are used as interchangeable terms. Could anything be more misleading?

The dupe is in most cases a very indolent person who imagines there are short cuts to fortune. As the author of this book says, speaking of certain advertisements and their victims—

> The mail-order swindler appeals to those who wish to get something for nothing, who imagine that the Fountain of Youth is for sale, who believe that they can learn to speak Spanish fluently in a few months, that a year's study will qualify them to be bank presidents, detectives, electrical engineers, authors, or that they can buy diamonds by mail more cheaply than they can get them at a reputable jeweler's.

This desire to "get something for nothing" is responsible for encouraging a large proportion of the crimes committed. And yet it is on the belief in getting "something for nothing" that the doctrine of Divine Grace and, consequently the whole edifice of the Christian life, may be said to be built. The sucker and the saint seem to be following the same path to different goals. Where is the point of departure? In answering that question we shall make clear, it is to be hoped, the difference between faith and credulity.

Let us look at the matter from the point of view of the writer we have quoted and of that large body of citizens who are content with such legitimate gains as their industrial value and commercial abilities are able to procure them. Wholesale scepticism—they will tell themselves—may lose the pleasure of inhabiting castles in the air, but it finds compensation in the simple but solid cottage that its practical wisdom has managed to build. When it reads these specious advertisements it remarks—"Too good to be true!" and goes its way. That is just how large numbers view the claims of the Church.

It is not that they regard them as undesirable. On the contrary, it is the very attractiveness of the hopes which Christianity holds out that puts them on their guard. Their suspicions are awakened by the appeal to their longing for some definite guidance in life, some assurance of an after-life, some authoritative affirmation concerning God. "If only I could believe these things," they say. But the fear of mistaking subjective desires for objective facts checks them. A stoic discipline inhibits surrender to the appeal which the Church makes to them. They will not drug themselves, they say, with the anodyne of comforting creeds at the expense of intellectual honesty. Better endure the agony of a suspended judgment or the bitter loneliness of atheism than that. Perhaps they try to be content with the simple but solid pleasures of material life and, seeing that certainty concerning any other world seems impossible, to make the best of the present one. But it will be strange if the haunting voices of unfulfilled aspirations do not make themselves heard.

We cannot but admire this stoical resolution, this refusal to dull the pain of life with beliefs too cheaply professed. We can do more than admire, we can approve. It is in some such manner that we must ourselves deny the authority of theories based on our own feelings as to what is desirable. The acceptance of the facts of revelation simply because they are comforting, has been one of the sins of our sentimental age. On someone remarking once to the novelist, George MacDonald—"It all seems too good to be true," he replied—"Nay, it is just so good it must be true." That is to put our own interpretation upon the term "good," and then postulate it of the universe. Even when what is postulated is actually authorized by revelation, it does not follow that our belief in it is an act of faith. In the majority of cases this attitude leads to all sorts of heresies.

It is "good" that all should be saved; therefore, runs the argument, "universalism must be true." It is "good" that we should be able to hold intercourse with the dead, therefore "spiritism must be true." It is "good" that evil should prove to be a delusion, therefore "Christian Science is true." A great deal that goes by the name of faith is merely credulous self-indulgence. We have to fight against this as much as against unbelief. It is part of the meaning of faith that it has overcome the temptation to believe what we want to believe. It shares that opposition to sentimental anodynes with the stoical unbeliever.

Faith, I take it, is essentially the acceptance of truth on authority. The true believer does not impose his fancies on the heavens but awaits the word that gives him liberty to accept them. Of those to whom came first the news of the Resurrection, it is said that they believed not "for very joy." In that phase of unbelief they shed self. The authority of the Gospel was not to be based on any over-hasty indulgence of hope.

Keys to Crookdom, by George C. Henderson. New York: D. Appleton and Company.

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Real belief, when it came, was induced by the objective fact itself. Our Lady's reception of the Angel Gabriel's news is our model. The overwhelming honor promised her is greeted at first with due caution—"How shall this be done?" Then follows the submissive acceptance that made her Mother of God—"Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it done to me according to thy word!" One feels that her attitude would have been the same if the secret divulged had been a sorrowful, instead of a glorious one. How different from the eager haste with which the devotees of modern cults accept the bidding of their own fancies!

It is this subordination of self to objective truth and authority which distinguishes faith from the kind of credulity of which we have been speaking. Belief, in the full Christian sense, is no cheap and easy acceptance of what happens to recommend itself to us as pleasing. If we accept "something for nothing" it is only when we have become convinced that we are "not worthy the least of His mercies." The grace of God has to prevail both over the natural pessimism of the heart which declares it "too good to be true," and over the cheap optimism which says that because it is good, therefore it must be true. In other words, Catholic faith is opposed both to unbelief and to the kind of belief we call credulity.

Saint Gregory

God gave the good Saint Gregory
The Fisher's seat to hold with power,
And to its pomp of fief and fee
(That even saints keep but an hour)
Joined of most holy poesie
The fragrant and perennial flower.

So in his book we still may read
How Benedict long walked with God
In sanctity of thought and deed,
Keeping the way his Master trod,
Seeking on earth no other meed,
Than thorny crown and scourger's rod.

Learn, too, we may how once, of old,
A horse, who'd borne the weight of Rome,
In no uncertain language told
His mistress he'd not stir from home—
How a good bear brought sheep to fold,
And iron floated light as foam.

So highest truths that faith can teach
Mingling with legends strange and quaint,
That in the peasant's fireside speech
Add to the glory of a saint,
Drew within shortest human reach,
A vision else too far and faint.

MARCUS SELDEN GOLDMAN.

THE LEGEND OF YS

By PADRAIC COLUM

THEY said of Dahut that her mother was a woman of the sea, and that the king, Dahut's father, had taken her from where he had found her seated on the rocks by the sea. They said, too, that the king had shut up this woman of the sea in the tower he had builded, and that he had had no pity upon her, although she was often heard crying in the tower—crying, the people said, for her home in the sea. The people told all this to explain why Dahut, the daughter of King Gradlon, was different from all other maidens, and why it was that she seemed to hate Ys, her father's city. Dahut's mother had died before Dahut could know her—died in the tower to the top of which she would climb to look out upon the sea.

Where the sea is now there was once a wide plain, and on it the city of Ys was builded—that is now beneath the sea. The sea's level was above the plain on which the city stood, and the sea was held off from the city by a long wall. Always the people of Ys could hear the sea as it beat against the wall. But they were not made fearful by the beating of the waves of the sea—their fathers had fought off the sea, and the wall that was built by them would hold it off always. Sometimes, when it could flood only part of their plain, they would open the great gate that was in the wall and let the sea flow in to lay its weeds and its salt upon their meadows.

The people of the city could look out upon the sea—there was the high tower that had been built by the king beside his palace, and when one mounted upon it one could see whether the sea was high or low, and count the ships that were upon it. The one who went oftenest up into the tower was Dahut, the daughter of the king.

As for King Gradlon, he did not know what his daughter did or how she lived. His beard was long; he read in deep books, and he slept long and deep in the night. And Dahut, his daughter, had golden eyes—golden eyes with no eyebrows above them, and a neck that was white and soft and throbbing, and red lips and little feet. She went softly through the ways of the palace, and she went softly up the stairs of the tower. Her father and the people of the city said—"Dahut is this, and Dahut is that;" but none know what Dahut was except those who saw her feasting on the rare fruits and the strange wine she had brought to her—or who saw her dancing at night.

They were young men whom she danced with. Some of them, after she had danced with them, she would take to the top of the tower, and she would make them promise that they would do some dangerous thing for her. Under the spell of her golden eyes they would make their promise, and afterwards they would go through the city looking like men who had lost their hope. Then they would leave the city, these young

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men whom Dahut had danced with, and be seen no more in Ys. It was from what they muttered as they went about the city that the people got the thought that Dahut hated Ys, her father's city. After a while they said no more—"Dahut is this, or Dahut is that." Now they said—"None know Dahut except those who have danced with her in the night. Would that the king would look upon Dahut and judge her and restrain her." But her father, his beard spread out upon his knees, read in his deep book while she feasted; or, with the silver key of the sea-gate around his neck, slept upon his purple bed while she danced in the palace, or climbed the stairway up into the tower.

There came a young man into Ys from a foreign land. Dahut pretended not to look upon him as he spoke to her father. She made a sign with her hand to him, and she brought him to her feast. Galor was this young man's name. They danced together. They feasted—and then boldly they entered the chamber where the king slept upon his purple bed, the silver key of the sea-gate hanging from around his neck. "Take the key," the young man said to Dahut. She took the silver key that was around her father's neck. "Open now the sea-gate that is in the long wall."

To the young men whom she had danced with before Dahut had said—"Open the sea-gate," and they had promised to do so, and then had become fearful and despairing on account of what they had promised to do. But this young man bade her take the key herself and open the gate. "Now let me make him forget what he has asked me to do," she said to herself. They danced, and the servants in the palace who saw them dance cried out—"Dahut is accursed, accursed;" and they crowded around where the king slept upon his purple bed, and they wakened him up. Down the stairway came the king, his great beard shaking up and down his chest. Dahut and Galor ran out and away from the palace. The young man lifted her up and carried her through the long meadows and down to the wall that was built against the sea.

"Open, you, the gate," he said, and she put the silver key that had always been hanging from her father's neck into the locks of the high gate. "I wanted another to do this," she said, "I wanted to make a man do a deed that would leave him fearful, and I wanted the sea that my mother cried to go back to, come in upon this city." She unlocked the gate. They heard the crying of the sea-birds beyond the wall. The sea began to push at the opened gate. Soon the waves pushed the gate wide. A sea-bird flying through the open gate lighted on the grass of the plain of Ys in the first light of the morning. "Beware if ever you go from me now," said Dahut to Galor. "Beware if ever you come to me again," said Galor to Dahut. He flung her against the wall, and he went away.

She went within the palace; she heard the bells of Ys peal in alarm. Her father came to her, carrying under his arm the great book he had been reading. He took her without, and he mounted upon the horse that was the swiftest in his stables. Dahut mounted behind him. The people cried to their king to gallop swiftly until he came to a place that the sea might not come to, and take possession of that place for the building of a new city. They cried to him while they stayed behind, mounting high upon the rocks.

So Gradlon with Dahut behind him galloped on and on, the sea flowing upon them as they rode. The sea dashed upon the heels of the horse; it flowed before them as they rode, and the horse splashed and plunged in the waves of the sea. And then a voice came to Gradlon telling him that he would have to throw behind him the thing that he held dearest, so that the sea taking it might flow no further. Then Gradlon threw behind him the great book that he carried. Still the sea flowed on, and the horse splashed deeper and plunged deeper in the waves. The voice came again, telling Gradlon that he would have to throw behind him the thing that he held dearest. Then he threw from the horse his daughter, Princess Dahut. The waves flowed over her, and then the waves ceased to flow; the sea drew away from that place. And there Gradlon halted and took possession of that place for the new city that his people would build.

They came to him, leaving the high rocks, and soon they began to build the new city. But the sea flows over where the city of Ys was, and now and again the people of the new city hear the bells ring, in lost Ys that is beneath the waves.

Mid-March Dispute

They never did exist, you think;
And so began a quarrel.
"What water in the woods to drink?
And where a leaf of laurel?"
Well, let me tell you, there they stamped
And bathed their bellies in a stream.
I felt as though my ribs had clamped,
Yet never thought to scream.

A dozen centaurs, all around,
I counted them thrice over
While ten were deviling a hound
And two were weaving clover.
I say again, I saw aright
Those bodies, silken, sorrel,
Through underbrush profanely bright
And overwhelmed with laurel.

I know the boughs are shriveled dank,
That brooks have shrunk from under;
But there they marshalled into rank
And galloped out asunder.
Ah, well, since you are captious still,
What purpose to contend?
Call it the wind, or what you will,
And have an end.

GEORGE O'NEIL.

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COMMUNICATIONS

STUDYING RELIGIOUS PREJUDICE

Wawa, Pa.

TO the Editor:—One of the points about the Catholic Church which seems to annoy and irritate non-Catholic Americans most, is its alleged "arrogance." Since the Church is only known to our neighbors through its American aspects, through ourselves, it might be well to study that impression. In fact, there is grave reason to study it.

Annoyance and irritation evoke counter-irritation. There is usually a cause for irritation, and counter-irritation should not lightly be mistaken in one's own mind for the joyous readiness of the martyr in the face of persecution. Both may be merely stupid and have nothing of the heroic about them. Both irritation and counter-irritation are growing in the United States, perhaps still imperceptibly to many people, as waves of popular feeling often do go unperceived by many people until they break and everybody is involved. When such waves do break, they break in action; and action in the field of religious conviction, when arising out of irritation, is only too likely to be more serious than action in any other field.

We have had a great many centuries of time in which to observe the effects of mutual intolerance in Europe, spreading to religion. It would seem unnecessary for America to repeat that hard experience, since in our origins it was to escape from, or in consequence of, such conditions prevailing in Europe that many of us came here—no matter what the motives of those who came later. Those of us who have been through it all are extremely unwilling to go through it again, unless matters of principle be involved.

It would be lamentable indeed were we to have learned nothing from the lesson of Europe; disheartening if we had merely succeeded in transplanting Europe's dissensions to a new soil on which their seed might revive and flourish even more vigorously. If this growing irritation, of which there is sufficient evidence to put men on their guard, is to be curbed and eventually overcome, it behooves both sides to analyze it in cold blood, as one would analyze a vital business situation, without sentiment or prejudice, and to lay out their conduct in the matter upon the results attained.

We Americans loudly claim for ourselves great tolerance. The justice of the claim may be questioned. Our political tolerance, for instance, to go no further, is not notable. Tolerance upon a matter of supreme conviction is a most unusual state of mind, and requires a certainty of knowledge and of judgment, and a broad experience of men and things which very few possess. With the average man conviction may be firm, but the reasons for the conviction nebulous, resulting in a highly nervous defense reaction when pressed for reasons; a state of mind which often leads to a certain truculence of statement and descent from higher planes to that on which the average man is more at his ease—sarcasm, vituperation, personalities—the argumentum ad hominem. Where tolerance is claimed, it is quite likely to be an attitude assumed to cloak urgent desire to avoid all argument lest one hear, perchance, something from the other side which one fears to admit, and which might be difficult to answer or deny; or, more often than not, it is only another name for complete indifference. This holds particularly true in matters of religion.

In the case of alleged hostility to the Catholic Church in the United States, it would be sufficient for the purpose of a preliminary study of the situation to take only the last seventy or eighty years, for our country of today is formed outwardly of the human material evolved during that period. Our colonial civilization, the evolution of national character between the Revolution and the Civil War do affect us vitally, but our present purpose would be to analyze a specific situation which, it is submitted for consideration, has developed in the period beginning about the middle of the nineteenth century.

It should be considered whether it is true that with that period began a mass invasion of a country already predominantly Protestant, and fairly homogeneous in population, by diverse racial strains, possessing nothing in common but the tie of a common faith, the Catholic faith, having no common ground of any sort with the people already inhabiting the country. One should take into consideration also in such a preliminary study, the type which may have been evolved by those already here, and the new immigrant types; the degree of education of the two types; the degree of intelligent understanding possessed by each, of the fundamentals of religion professed; the preconceived notions of each type of the other's national characteristics and religious beliefs. These suggestions are offered briefly for the purpose of provoking analysis and intelligent discussion by students of history and religion.

The point of the suggestion is the writer's conviction that irritation and ill-will, focusing on the Church, has in fact nothing to do with the Church, no matter how intensely people on both sides of the question may feel that it has, and that most of its sources must be sought elsewhere.

It should be considered whether Protestant "colonists" did not bring with them, in addition to positive religious belief, the notion of Catholics as proscribed men, properly proscribed as disloyal and unpatriotic; as men given to pernicious practices—possibly even to idolatry—whether these were not ideas arising naturally out of the long period of ignorance succeeding, in England and Scotland, the break from the Church, coupled with active propaganda by government adverse to the Church. One might go further than the mere suggestion of possible Protestant ignorance of Catholics and of their belief and practices. To judge from the writings of bishops of the Established Church of England, and Scottish divines; of the great English Methodist preachers and the fiery, zealous founders of the Society of Friends, there was a darkness of Egypt over all their land not attributable nor by them attributed solely to the "Church of Rome" (they had enough to say about "Rome" aside from that), but also and principally to the neglect of the lower orders of the people by the Established Church. It should be considered whether it was not from these darkened lower orders of the United Kingdom that, in the main, our earlier settlers sprang.

Did not the Catholic "immigrant," too, bring with him to America, in at least one racial bloc, a firm religious belief rescued from the embers of Europe—a simple faith, quite sufficient for him without learned reasoning and proof, even if the general state of Europe at the time and his own economic condition had permitted him to acquire learning? Let the analyist consider whether he did not bring with him the notion of all Protestants as heretics, deserters from the true faith; and whether he also came from people darkened in all the

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outward things. In such a study we must not emphasize, for the moment, the all-importance of the light of faith. In other matters was he as dark as his predecessors and future fellow-citizens?

It is the writer's opinion that these things are true and that for many decades these two firm religious beliefs and equally firm prejudices (in spite of sporadic clashes and a certain amount of partisan skirmishing) did not meet except in theory. Only after almost complete absorption of the new elements into the body of the nation did they begin to assume the aspect of two camps, apparently hostile—our situation today.

Let it be considered also whether education in America during the period to be studied has not of necessity assumed the form of mass training for the demands of a new economic life and the sharing by each individual in all the advantages that new life had to offer. In the writer's opinion that also is true, the educational process resulting in an average mediocrity of thought concurrent with an alert precocious aptitude in material things, out of which mediocrity those only rise who cannot be kept down by any hard and fast system. The tendency of education has been to achieve the greatest good of the greatest number; the product, uniformity of material comfort; the by-product, uniformity of method of thought on other than material things, upon a low average level. No thoughtful observer would deny the greatness of the achievement; the raising of a great mass of humanity to a uniform higher level of comfort through education. One might dwell thereon at length and with enthusiasm. It is offered for consideration, however, that this achievement may be properly considered as only the foundation, well and solidly laid; as a step only, though a vitally important one in the process of building a great nation.

In this general condition in the United States and at this time, for the purpose of our study, one may consider whether it is not true (and to what extent, if a fact, the Catholic Church may be affected or even damaged thereby) that the Catholic offers, as is often alleged, not infrequently the appearance of "church" solidarity in matters which pertain purely to Caesar. One may consider whether there is among us, as alleged, in places which emphatically should be the last in which to expect it, an exuberance of bad manners and rough-shod tactlessness which, if it truly exists, must be appallingly disquieting to the outsider. One might ask, if this does exist, even in isolated cases and by no means as a general condition, if the non-Catholic, quite convinced that the average Catholic is not more intelligent than himself, may not with some show of justification set down such phenomena as an expression of the "ruthlessness" and "arrogance" of the Catholic Church. Being, in his turn, no more intelligent than his Catholic neighbor, the non-Catholic may not recognize that all this "arrogance" that he says he sees might be in reality merely the exuberant self-expression of men flushed with the strong wine of full liberty and equality, for the first time free and equal with their fellows after centuries of civil and economic oppression and ignorance sternly enforced.

If these things do exist among us(as our neighbors claim, with maledictions, that they do) their manifestation should afford (rightly interpreted) a spectacle supremely satisfactory to the enthusiasts who believe in the perfectibility of humanity, and who look on our America as a new Garden of Eden, set aside from the world in which to work out the great transmutation. It might be interpreted as the first dawning strength of enterprising manhood among masses of people kept through centuries in a state of degradation. No doubt it would be so interpreted in many quarters were it not for the curious impression which overshadows the situation to the detriment of dispassionate analysis: that the average Catholic is ignorant of his faith and of the physical organization and objectives of his church, and that his manners—even in places higher than the average—are sometimes lacking in distinction. It is not necessary to assume complacently that any accusation leveled against Catholics individually, or as a group or class, must be a diabolical manifestation—an attack upon the Church. Presupposing an intelligent power of evil, a church divinely founded (and of necessity also guaranteed against loss of the Divine truth entrusted to its care by any stupidity of which its human members may be capable) must always be exposed to assaults from that evil power. One of the simplest and most effective methods of attack by such an evil intelligence would seem to be a boring from within: a playing upon human stupidity, prejudice, ambitions and passion.

It is, however, proper to assume for the purpose of such a study as is proposed, a general average of intelligence (rather than of stupidity) and if in a large number of people of general average intelligence, even though the grade of intelligence be not high, there is to be found a consensus of opinion that Catholics (let us discard the phrase "the Catholic Church") in America are distinctly disagreeable people, and may be dangerous—and that opinion has every appearance of growing into active hostility—let Catholics go into themselves seriously and dispassionately and find out where the trouble lies. The writer is quite convinced that it does not lie in "the Church."

WILLIAM FRANKLIN SANDS.

CATHOLIC COLLEGES

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editor:—Graduates of Catholic colleges, and Catholics interested in higher education are glad to learn of the investigation which has been started concerning the state of health of our Catholic colleges and the reason for their failure to function as the producers of leaders in the fields of intellectual activity.

The investigation is, in itself, a healthy sign. Up to the present time, the education furnished in our Catholic colleges has been subjected to a conspiracy of silence on the part of the majority of cultured Catholics. Others, with a mistaken sense of loyalty, have loudly extolled its excellence, although supporting facts were lacking.

As a recent issue of The Commonweal stated, Catholic colleges, which should be the repositories and producers of the best, can point to only rare instances of men and women students who have achieved distinction in literature, music or other fields of creative activity. As a graduate of a Catholic college, I feel that the reason is primarily a financial one, made more acute by the unwise policy of the founders of many of the Catholic colleges.

There are too many Catholic colleges. It is a generally known fact that the number of Catholics who have become wealthy, and are therefore in a position to make endowments, is comparatively small. Of these men, there are two classes —one which is unable to appreciate the cultural values and is opposed to higher education; and the other which sees greater financial and social prestige to be obtained from giving support to prominent non-sectarian institutions. There are, of course, some wealthy and generous Catholics who appreciate the importance of the part which Catholic colleges must take in pub-

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lic life—but these men cannot support all the institutions needing their help.

In Massachusetts, there are two well-known Catholic colleges —Boston College and Holy Cross; in New York, there are Fordham University, Manhattan College, and Saint John's; in New Jersey, there is Saint Peter's College; in Washington, Georgetown University and the Catholic University. In this section, there are other Catholic colleges which do not come into the public notice as often as the ones mentioned. Their athletes make few records.

Of men's colleges alone, Catholics are called upon to support eight within a radius of 150 miles.

Why should there be eight Catholic men's colleges in this district? Why should there be more than one? Some will at once bring forward the many advantages accruing to a student from attendance at a small college. These advantages are acknowledged; but the small college must be adequately equipped, with a modern plant, efficient faculty, and a wise board of admissions. There are enough Catholics in this section of the country to support eight colleges. Why not centralize resources and furnish this district with one perfectly equipped Catholic university, whose reputation for scholarship and public achievement shall be unquestioned?

Because bills must be met, Catholic men's colleges are forced to open their registers to incompetents and dead-weights. The large number of such students makes necessary modification of courses, and the retarding of students who are of university grade. When the faculty needs to be augmented, the Catholic college rarely has the funds to pay the salary of a really good man. It is compelled to employ middle-aged mediocrities, or recent graduates who seek teaching posts to help to finance a law course. Even when these young men are competent, the division of interest works to the detriment of the student.

I shan't speak of Catholic women's colleges, because that question brings up absurdities. Within the limits of New York City, there are three colleges for Catholic women—Manhattanville, the College of Mount Saint Vincent, and Saint Joseph's College. Going outside of this boundary just a few miles, there is the college at Marymount, Tarrytown; the College of New Rochelle, and Saint Elizabeth's at Convent Station, New Jersey. And there are others. It seems to be the aim of every religious community of women to establish a college without considering resources, equipment, or its own ability to understand the problem. These colleges have been yearly turning out young women whose highest objective has been the securing of a license to teach in the grade schools of the city. There are some who look to fit themselves for posts in the high schools, but these are few. Recently training in commercial subjects has been added to the curricula of some of these colleges, with the new goal of a secretaryship at $40.00 a week. A few of these young women have studied law, but that a graduate should pursue the liberal arts, or look toward a career in social service, would be a strange thought to the faculty. These institutions are suffering from the worn-out inferiority complex. It seems to be inconceivable to their faculties that any of their students should achieve distinction in cultural activities, and subjects are taught with the implication that the students are viewing them for a time only, unless courses for an M. A. require further pursuit of them. Of course the M. A. is taken simply because one wishes to advance in the New York City school system. The problem of the inferior student in women's Catholic colleges is acute. Scholarship and intelligent understanding of the current movements in the fields of art, letters, or music are practically unknown. Vide the publications of Catholic women's colleges.

The only solution of the problem of the Catholic college seems to lie in restriction and consolidation. Cultured Catholics wish their sons and daughters to have the intellectual advantages afforded by the large non-sectarian universities. The intellectual contacts to be made in Catholic colleges at present are rare. If the existing Catholic colleges are not willing to submerge their identity for the general good, there will be left only the question of strengthening of the Newman Clubs at the non-sectarian colleges, and extending their activities to include courses in Catholic philosophy and moral theology. Catholic colleges at the present time are not providing opportunities for scholarship, culture, and self-development.

A Catholic college has no reason for existence if it be not in a position to afford ideal opportunities for the pursuit of culture. If American Catholic colleges cannot hold the place in intellectual life held by the European Catholic universities for so many centuries, they had better cease to exist. And I think their failure to do this is not solely due to their lack of resources, but to their complacency in the production of mediocrity.

C. MOLANPHY.

(While, as is very often the case in this department, The Commonweal does not subscribe to the ideas expressed by the writer of the above letter, we feel that the subject is of such interest and importance as to warrant the publication of views which we have reason to believe are shared by many Catholics, in the hope that a general discussion of the subject will follow in the correspondence columns of this review.—The Editors.)

A CALL TO YOUTH

Boston, Mass.

TO the Editor:—Various editorials in The Commonweal for the past few issues have stressed the necessity of arousing the Catholics of this country to a sense of the position they should assume in the intellectual and cultural affairs of the community. You have, on various occasions, written and spoken of the necessity of this awakening, not only from the standpoint above mentioned, but from one more important—that of taking upon our own shoulders, to some extent at least, the expression of the Catholic viewpoint, upon subjects chiefly of a material nature—of the every-day world in which we work and live—government, business; education, and the affairs of the family—all of which has been borne by the clergy.

You and your associates speak of it as a new movement—as one which must arouse the American Catholics from their past slumber. And you point out the reasons for this awakening; the dangers threatening the commonweal, the growing indifference to the things of the soul, the effects of this indifference upon the individual and his relations to the community, and the decay of the marriage structure with its consequent effects upon family life and the home.

No movement, no cause, having for its ultimate object an end, not in itself directly beneficial to the individual in a material way, can, in my opinion, be successful unless buoyed up with an over-abundance of that earnest enthusiasm, devotion, and self-sacrifice found only in youth. I will go even further and say that a movement such as this will not gather sufficient momentum to cause a ripple in that vast sea of indifference, in which a majority of our Catholics are submerged, unless its ranks overflow with young men and women.

EDWARD F. LYONS, JR.

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THE PLAY

By R. DANA SKINNER

Outside Looking In

THIS play by Maxwell Anderson, one of the authors of What Price Glory?, is easily the most interesting production of the early season. It is essentially mixed fare, running the whole gamut of fine characterization, penetrating insight, weak dramatic structure, moments of splendid power and stretches of excessively poor taste and misplaced values. In its effects as well as in its defects it gives one a great deal to think about.

The story itself is quite simple. A young hobo, Little Red, tries to help in the escape of a girl, Edna, who has killed her stepfather because of a sordid crime he had committed against her. They fall in with a gang of hoboes dominated by one Oklahoma Red. Little Red's announced intention of marrying Edna and settling down to work, runs counter to the established public opinion of hobodom and "queers" him with the gang. In the end, however, after many stormy scenes, Oklahoma Red helps them to get across the border. On this slender framework, Mr. Anderson has woven an amazing pattern of human nature as it runs outside the limits of organized society—ourselves mirrored back by the outlaw mind, pitilessly, with caustic humor and a certain savage delight.

Here is a case where the theme is obviously more important than the plot or story of the play. And the theme, as I take it, is the impossibility of escaping public opinion. Imagine yourself an outcast, presumably a rebel against all the codes and the prejudices of society, searching for the phantom of happiness in the irresponsibility which lies without the law and defies it. Suddenly you find that you are not alone, that kindred shadowy spirits are moving about and with you. You think they, too, are enamored of freedom. But you are mistaken. They form an empire, and you are now one of its citizens. They, too, have a code; prejudices; unwritten, but strict laws. If you conform, all is well with you; if not, well then you face the alternative of fight or flight. If you choose flight, it can only be back to the organized society you thought you had abandoned forever. If you fight, you are the leader of a revolution, playing with grim chances. But no matter what you do, you are contending with public opinion. That is the immutable law of life.

I do not say that this is the point Mr. Anderson intended to bring out. His play is based on Jim Tully's autobiography, Beggars of Life, and his interest may have been primarily to show to ninety-five hundredths of the world what the other five-hundredth part thinks. But the net result of his picturesque and exceedingly frank statement of the case is what I have described—to establish with impressive force the perpetual struggle of the individual with public opinion, whether you measure that opinion in terms of nations and official governments, or in terms of outlaw empire. The novelty of Mr. Anderson's work lies in his choice of material in the hitherto unexplored fields of the vagrant's mind. Its value lies in the evident sincerity of his attempt to make one type of human nature understandable to another type, a small minority set forth in terms which the lethargic majority can grasp.

Of course a play of this sort is solid meat to character actors. You have here eleven hoboes, each as distinct and individual as if picked from eleven different nationalities; not the hoboes of vaudeville, you understand, but real men, sharing only their citizenship in the outlaw empire, and separated from each other as individuals by every barrier which race, home origins, degree of intellect, education, energy, initiative, daring or cunning can erect. Mr Anderson, working with Jim Tully's material, has defined these characters with a deft and illuminating touch. The actors in the present production are more than alive to their opportunity and present a composite portrait of rare excellence and vividness. James Cagney as Little Red, and Charles Bickford as Oklahoma Red, stand forth, as they should—but in completeness rather than in quality of characterization. Blyth Daly, alone, as Edna, fails to sustain the mood or the quality of the piece. She is neither the girl of innate refinement lost in a strange world, nor the amiable hoyden projected from a dissolute home. She is a little of each —which destroys the illusion of her being anything at all but a speaker of lines. The play frequently lags and loses its hold because of her. She is either the victim of inadequate direction or very poor casting.

And now we come to the flagrant defect of an otherwise notable stage portraiture. Mr. Anderson is obviously a dramatic realist—by which I mean that he is photographically minute in depicting his characters and scenes. He does not deal in the art of illusion. He would probably justify the excessive blasphemy which courses throughout the play, by saying that this is precisely what his characters would say in real life. He would resent any suggestion that he could obtain the illusion of reality with even greater force by the omission of this offensive language—just as a skilful writer avoids the necessity for italicizing words even in dialogue, by omission and rearrangement of phrases so that they simulate the spoken emphasis without being literally faithful to speech. But I think I can point out where his case falls down, even on his own chosen ground of literal exactness. And if you don't think the question is important, you have only to watch the flood of imitation which has been pouring after What Price Glory? and They Knew What They Wanted.

Here is the point I want to make. If you are to justify blasphemy on the grounds that it is "real life," then why hesitate to use other phrases and expressions equally true to life and character? With great fastidiousness, Mr. Anderson proclaims the maternal descent of one of his characters from a "bug." In the next breath, the name of Christ is ripped out with cheerful unconcern. Why cling tenaciously to blasphemy when one blushes modestly at vulgarity and eschews it? There is something twisted here—something which seems to say—"Blasphemy will offend only a small minority, but plain English vulgarity may offend even the many." Can it be that the demands of artistic realism are imperative only when the majority will accept and tolerate them? Does good taste begin to restrain "art" only when the box office standard is applied? Mr. Anderson has not established his case even as a rampant realist. And on the higher grounds that all true art gains in strength as it gains restraint and careful selection, Mr. Anderson is guilty of besmirching an otherwise excellent piece of work by the cheapest and most degrading of all devices. There is no excuse for the offense offered. Mr. Anderson has a

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magnificent opportunity to render a true service to art by an immediate and thorough revision of his text.

The Mud Turtle

THIS unappetizing title adorns a play of rather snatchy merit, dealing with the trials of a young waitress who marries into a French Canadian household of northern Minnesota. She finds herself projected into a tense struggle with her father-in-law, a mordant personality to whom everyone must submit. But Kate, the waitress, is not the kind to submit. In the end she brings the old farmer to terms after many harrowing scenes.

In general, this is a play patterned after They Knew What They Wanted, and the part of Kate has a distressingly close resemblance to that of Amy, in which Pauline Lord made so marked a sensation last year. Miss Helen MacKellar makes Kate plausible enough in spite of a dubious motivation and a plot that hinges too entirely on the unbelievably domineering character of the father-in-law. This is meant to be a play of considerable power, but unfortunately it falls far short of the mark set in the author's mind.

Canary Dutch

HERE is a play written and acted by Willard Mack. I say acted by Mr. Mack, because the play is so written and presented that only one rôle has any real importance or interest. Canary Dutch follows the formula set for The Music Master and all subsequent German dialect plays. The part of the aged convict who comes back into the world after serving a term for counterfeiting, is ably handled by Mr. Mack with a plethora of sentiment and a frank appeal to the tear ducts. If you like this kind of play in which a rather helpless old man is buffeted about by fortune, and in which the ultimate happy ending is inevitable from the first five minutes on, you will find Canary Dutch good entertainment of its kind. At least we can say that in returning to this type of play, Mr. Belasco, the producer, is rendering a better service than in the unfortunate material with which he sprayed Broadway last year.

Too Much Folly in Grand Street

THE romping spirit of satire and burlesque which took most of the sting out of the more sophisticated parts of the Grand Street Follies has unfortunately over-reached itself in the later editions of that Neighborhood Playhouse review. Even real wit has its limits of good taste and appropriateness. I say this with real regret—because there are few playhouses in New York where good taste usually attains a higher level and maintains it than at the Neighborhood. And few reviews are better than four-fifths of this one. There is no folly greater than over-shooting a good mark.

CONTRIBUTORS

STANLEY B. JAMES is an English writer and the author of The Adventures of a Spiritual Tramp.

THEODORE MAYNARD is a poet and essayist, and the author of American Poets.

GEORGE O'NEIL is a contributor of verse and critical essays to current periodicals.

ANNE EASBY-SMITH, MARCUS SELDEN GOLDMAN and R. R. MACGREGOR are new contributors to The Commonweal.

SIR BERTRAM C. A. WINDLE, NELSON COLLINS, GEORGE SHUSTER and PADRAIC COLUM are frequent contributors to The Commonweal.

BOOKS

BOOKS ON EVOLUTION

IT IS wholly impossible to indicate a tithe of the books which have been published on this subject which is so much before the public today but the following will at least provide a selection from which all the angles of evolution can be examined.

Taking Darwin, himself, first—The Origin of Species and The Descent of Man must be studied, and The Voyage of the Beagle should be added. Serious students must also have his Life and Letters, as well as those of Huxley and Wallace to complete this part of the section. Further must be added Darwinism, by A. R. Wallace (New York: The Macmillan Company. 1889) especially for its discussion of and dissent from the materialistic views drawn from Darwin's writings by many of his followers. Biology and Its Makers, by W. A. Locy (New York: Henry Holt and Company. 1908) is a most valuable book of reference as it gives a brief biography of the persons concerned in this controversy. Darwinism Today, by Vernon L. Kellogg (New York: Henry Holt and Company. 1907) as far as its date of issue, gives a most useful account of the controversy with the pros and cons fairly indicated. An unfortunate and ignorant anti-Catholic bias is exhibited here and there, but it is a book which is well worth a place in this collection. As a general compendium, perhaps out of very many might be chosen Outlines of Evolutionary Biology, by A. Dendy (London: Constable. 1912). For a whole-hearted treatment from the extreme materialistic standpoint, The Organism as a Whole, by the late J. Loeb, (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. 1916) should be read, and for serious and most valuable criticism, two books by T. H. Morgan—Evolution and Adaptation (New York: The Macmillan Company. 1903) and A Critique of the Theory of Evolution (New York: Princeton University Press. 1923). With the addition of Heredity and Environment, by E. G. Conklyn (New York: Princeton University Press. 1923), and Convergence in Evolution, by A. Willey (London: Murray. 1911) we may call the general section tolerably complete. At least the man who has mastered these books can scarcely find himself at a loss in any discussion of the question.

The Mendelian aspect of the question is today far the most important, and if the reader wants to confine himself to one book, he may confidently choose Mendelism, by R. C. Punnett (New York: The Macmillan Company). As editions of this are constantly appearing, the last should be asked for. There is no rival to this as a simple but truly scientific exposition of the subject; but the section will be incomplete without Mendel and His Principles of Heredity, by W. Bateson (London: Cambridge University Press. 1909) in which are given translations of Mendel's classical papers as well as a very full account of the whole subject. The Physical Basis of Heredity, by T. H. Morgan (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company. 1919) is not easy reading, but it contains the account of the profoundly important experiments on the breeding of the fruit-fly, and the bearing which they have on the question indicated in the title; a question very hotly contested today.

That there have always been opponents of the Darwinian hypothesis everybody knows, and its author's special thesis of natural selection has been totally abandoned by some, and holds with hardly any the high position which it once occupied. And the major hypothesis of transformism, or evolution, as it is commonly called, has always had its opponents, though none of them so far have endeavored to set up a rival hypothesis. In

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recent days, three books have appeared, all worthy of the most serious study by anyone who would know what is to be said against the theory.

Membres et Ceintures des Vertébrés Tétrapodes, by L. Vialleton (Paris: Gaston Doin) does not seem a hopeful title, and indeed the first and most considerable section of the book is wholly unintelligible save by experts in vertebrate morphology. But the second part—Critique Morphologique du Transformisme—is a study which cannot be left out when the theory is under discussion. It is not easy reading, but then that is, and must be, true of most close pieces of criticism. Nevertheless, The Dogma of Evolution, by Louis T. More (New York: Princeton University Press. 1925) and The Case Against Evolution, by Dr. O'Toole (New York: The Macmillan Company. 1925) both of which have recently been reviewed in these columns, are easy to read, even by the non-specialist, and must certainly find a place in such a collection of books.

The Genesis of Species, by St. George Mivart (New York: The Macmillan Company. 1871), is a book long out of print, but still to be obtained, which certainly should be in the possession of any student of the subject. It is not only a piece of criticism which seriously troubled Darwin and his supporters, but it has stood, and some of its contentions are generally conceded today. Further, it was not only the object of unjust and even blunder-headed attack by Huxley, but it was the first work to show what the bearing of the theory upon Catholic teaching really was, and to inaugurate the apparently unending discussion as to what Saint Augustine did, or did not, mean by his celebrated Rationes Seminales. Evolution and Dogma, by J. A. Zahm (Chicago. 1896) should certainly be added for its historic interest. Two great works by Father Wasmann must by no means be omitted—Modern Biology and the Theory of Evolution (Kegan Paul. 1910) is certainly the most important work which has appeared from this side of the controversy, and its learned Jesuit author, the leading authority in certain branches of entomology, is preëminently entitled to pronounce an opinion on this subject. The Problems of Evolution (Kegan Paul. 1909) is an account of the famous discussion which took place in Berlin between the Jesuit and a picked body of materialistic scientists. The Theory of Evolution, by Karl Frank, S.J. (Herder's. 1913) written by one of Father Wasmann's pupils, should be added to the list. Thoughts of a Catholic Anatomist, by the late Thomas Dwight (New York: Longmans, Green and Company. 1911) is known to many, and should be read by all Catholic students. It is a little book, but full of valuable thought. Le Darwinisme au Point de Vue de l'Orthodoxie Catholique (Brussels: Vromant. 1921). A translation in English, published both in New York and in London, by Canon Henry de Dorlodot, is as important a work as any alluded to, and no one should discuss the evolution question from the Catholic standpoint who has not mastered what the erudite professor of palaeontology in the Catholic University of Louvain has to say on the subject. He may not, and will not, be agreed with by everyone, for he is a convinced evolutionist—but he should be read.

The late Father Gerard, S.J., was the author of a number of bright and simple criticisms of evolutionary writings, which none the less were very searching. They are published by the Catholic Truth Society of England, and the most important is Evolutionary Philosophy and Common Sense. It should not be necessary to call attention to his crushing exposure of Haeckel's shallow book, The Riddle of the Universe, in The Old Riddle and the Newest Answer (New York: Longmans, Green and Company. 1907). The book by Haeckel still does great harm with the imperfectly educated, and it is well to remember that there was a sixpenny edition of the reply. The Beginnings of Science, by E. J. Menge (Boston: Badger. 1918) is a good simple account by a competent authority; and in The Church and Science, by B. C. A. Windle (Catholic Truth Society of England. 1924) will be found a fairly complete account of the evolutionary discussion up to date, and an inquiry into the attitude of the Church towards it.

Cardinal Newman, by Bertram Newman. New York: The Century Company. $2.00.

IT IS now more than forty years since I had the privilege of making the acquaintance of Cardinal Newman. He was an old man, and I was a young one; he had been a convert for some forty years, and I some forty days, perhaps; and the occasion was one not easily to be forgotten. I heard the last discourse that he ever uttered from a pulpit and listened to the few whispered words which he addressed to a deputation of the Catholic Truth Society, headed by Archbishop Vaughan less than a month before he died—the last official utterance of his lifetime. And from a period even earlier than our first meeting, I have been a constant student of The Oxford Movement. Not everyone understands what the Oxford of that day—centuries removed from that of today—was, still less what the position of things in the Anglican establishment then was. Mr. Newman sees these things with perfect clearness and makes them obvious to his readers with equal lucidity. The book deals mainly with Newman as a literary personage, as one of the greatest masters, not only of the English language, but as a permanent influence in literature. The method adopted is to trace the events of his life dealing with each of his works as they appeared.

In the case of Newman—of any great thinker—it is always interesting to look back upon those who built him up, or rather helped him to build himself up. When we read this book the thought comes to us—who influenced Newman most? The author very naturally does not mention Thomas Scott of Aston Sandford, "to whom," as Newman said, "I almost owe my soul." Scott was a truly remarkable character though there are very, very few today who could tell you a single fact about him, and his influence must have been important.

And there were other and minor characters whose names will occur to students of the time. But what of the better known men? It is again interesting to be reminded that Newman and Disraeli were playfellows in their childhood, thus recalling once more the ancient fable that Newman was of Hebrew extraction. He certainly had, as everybody knows, a large nose, but it was in no way Semitic; and no one could imagine two persons less alike than Disraeli, as I remember him in his old age, and his former playmate. He, at any rate, had no influence on Newman. The first person of real note who had, was Whateley, a Fellow of Oriel, as was Newman.

I suppose no one now ever reads Whateley's Logic. I have tried to, but it is a most arid work. And I wonder how many today have read his Historic Doubts as to Napoleon Bonaparte, one of the most brilliant and biting pieces of satire ever penned, and wonderfully adaptable to the modernists of this moment, who, being modernists, have probably never heard of such a piece of ancient learning. Whateley, by the way, was just a little bit of a modernist himself, and hating Catholics and Evangelicals with an almost equal fervor, went to live

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in Ireland, which at that time contained none but those two varieties of mankind. There he lived for some years on Saint Stephen's Green, opposite his former pupil, Newman, without a sign of recognition passing between them. Yet there can be no kind of doubt as to the influence that Whateley had upon Newman's development. Nor that of Hurrell Froude—a man forgotten today, who died young but not before he had graven himself on the memories of his friends. The author rather warns his readers of Froude's Remains (the quaint title then in vogue for posthumously collected writings). Well; I am not sure, with judicious skipping I found them quite readable, far more readable than Nemesis of Faith, written by his brother, James Anthony, which cost its luckless writer a professorship. In his short life, Hurrell Froude influenced Newman profoundly, and perhaps as much by making him known to Keble as in any other way. Froude, on his death-bed, said that if he were asked—as a certain thief is said to have been—what good deed he had done during his life, he would name that as his most useful action. Keble has become a half-forgotten memory, and his poems are probably read by few in these days of vers libre; but he was a saintly and remarkable character, and what astonishes one about him is, that with his amazing abilities and extraordinarily early flowering, he did not achieve fame—perhaps he had no desire to do so. Last of all, one cannot omit that bizarre character, Blanco White, ex-priest, quondam Anglican parson, finally Unitarian minister, the author of what many think the greatest sonnet in the English language. Blanco White is nearly forgotten, but no one can doubt that the long evenings when he and Newman played the violin together (an instrument at which they were both adepts) had their influence.

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BRIEFER MENTION

Proteus, by Vernon Lee. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company. $1.00.

A LITTLE book of Bergsonian trifling comes from the author of Vital Lies, Satan the Master, and other works of rather aesthetical legerdemain that have given a certain reputation to Vernon Lee. In her first study, Intelligence and Proteus, she distinguishes the intelligence from reason and logic, which issue dictates and enunciates laws and argues that —"Intelligence is rather irresponsible and, one might add, cannot help being so because it is essentially responsive." In her second chapter, she grapples with a tougher question—Intelligence and Ethics. With Intelligence and Aesthetics, she is on safer, if mistier, grounds, and with the Uses and Abuses of her strangely named faculty of intelligence, the wheels of her style result in a blue whirl which is, of course, of an attractive hue.

An Alphabet of the Altar, by E. Vincent Wareing. London: Harding and More. 6 d.

IN its present form, an Alphabet of the Altar invites, as the author says—"and may perhaps evoke, constructive criticism." To write well for children is a difficult task, and while the intent of this little brochure is excellent, we may be dubious that some of it will have the desired effect on the childish soul. The familiarity with sacred things that is supposed to be a beautiful characteristic of Catholic character, calls for very careful adaptation to the child mind, which is sometimes more inclined to the reverential than to the familiar. Some of the letters of this alphabet are followed by verses that are of an instructive nature, and others of a simple spiritual uplift. The individual child should be studied in this matter.

The Dublin Review for July, August and September, is an eloquent body of interesting papers. The Conversion of the Norse, by Henry Harrington, is an able study of a subject of great importance at the present moment. Letters of Louise Imogen Guiney are valuable and charming matter in any appreciation of our great poet, whom we are only beginning to value at her real worth as a lofty, faithful, and divinely-whimsical soul. An article that is particularly interesting today, when the parallel of Rome is so often invoked by our social prophets, is The Crash of Empire, by Bernard Holland. Mr. Holland has no patience with the theory, so promulgated by some sentimental historians, that the empire fell because Christianity had weakened its ancient fibre, and is not inclined to range himself with those who seek the main reasons for the collapse in the economic field. In the writings of Salvianus, Bishop of Marseilles—a somewhat obscure author of the fifth century—which he uses as the text of his article, Mr. Holland finds abundant testimony that Rome fell because moral disintegration had gone too far for the Christian religion to transform it in the comparatively short time before the barbarian inroads.

The Commonweal would greatly appreciate the receipt of copies of numbers 5, 6, and 9, Volume I, from any of its readers who may possess extra copies of these numbers.

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THE QUIET CORNER

"I counsel thee, shut not thy heart nor thy library."—C. LAMB.

"I see there's to be another poetry contest," said Dr. Anglicus, yawning over his magazine. "The first prize is to be $500.00."

"If you please, sir," said Tittivillus excitedly, "would you mind telling me how I may enter it?"

"I always felt that behind your duster lurked a poetical soul," said the Doctor kindly. "What made you wish to become a poet?"

"Well, I've read so much of your poetry, sir, and recently I've been studying it as a model for my own efforts. I think I have caught something of your own singing quality in this poem of mine. It is a great poem," he added modestly.

"So I am your inspiration?" asked the Doctor, trying to hide his gratification. "Let me see the poem."

"Well," said Tittivillus, embarrassedly wiping his brow with his inevitable duster, "I might read it to you."

"Spoken like a true poet," cried Angelicus. "They always want to read their poems, hoping to make a crutch of enunciation to support their limping feet. Begin."

"If you'll excuse me," said Primus Criticus, "I"—

"Not at all," interrupted Angelicus, "you'll remain right here until Tittivillus has read his poem. The purpose of this library is to foster literature, the arts, and public affairs. True, the only public affairs around here, seem to be my own personal books, which everyone borrows without my permission, and few take the trouble to return."

"It's a nature poem," apologized Tittivillus.

"I knew it," groaned Criticus.

Doctor Angelicus interrupted him with a thundering, "Commence, boy!" and Tittivillus, dropping his duster over the innocent head of Dante which stood on the table, pulled a manuscript from his pocket, and recited—

"Once there was a puffin bird,
Who lived in Labrador;
His length from tip to tip of wing
Was nearly three feet, four.
Like all big souls upon this globe,
He had one weakness, true—
He rarely ever could resist
A flapidoodle-doo.
Now 'flaps' abound in Labrador;
When taken by adults,
While quite delicious to the tongue,
They bring most strange results.
They cause good puffin birds to reel,
With muddled brains a-jangle,
What once was logic and pure thought,
Becomes a fearful tangle.
Yet strange to state in Puffin Town,
No law of prohibition,
Had banned the flapidoodle-doo,
And beaks were often—Titian.
This puffin bird loved flaps—and so
The chase he would pursue.
I'll here describe to you the genus
Flapidoodle-doo.
He's small and white, with bumpéd back,
And when he seeks protection,
Into a ball he'll roll himself,
Thus to avoid detection.

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Some travelers in puffin land,
Ensnared this very puffin.
They bore him off aboard their yacht,
And fed him on a muffin.
At length they came unto a land
Of summer-time vacation,
Of country clubs and tennis courts,
A place of recreation.
The travelers cast anchor here;
Puff's spirits, sad and low,
Made them release him from his cage,
And say—'Good puffin, go!'
Then through the air he winged his way,
And quite a distance flew,
When down below he thought he saw
A flapidoodle-doo.
All white and round upon the grass,
It lay, so captivating;
To flee temptation now would be
Well—just excruciating.
The old wild flame within him leapt;
Away with resolutions!
Then down he swept upon his prey,
Nor thought he of delusions.
With one great gulp he swallowed it;
But what a sad illusion!
Instead of satisfaction it
Produced inside confusion.
Then rushed with vim upon the scene
A man, an irate fogey:
'You ate my ball, you fiendish bird,
And I was beating bogey!'
The puffin dropped his head as if
To murmur an apology.
The golfer said—'Get off the green,
I care not for zoölogy.'"

"Tittivillus, you're a nature-faker," said Primus Criticus, severely. "Who ever heard of flapidoodle-doos anyway, and what bird would ever swallow a golf ball? Poetry should have at least some semblance of actual possibility."

"Ah," said Dr. Angelicus loftily, "I've always mistrusted your ability as a critic, and your remark vindicates my mistrust. Didn't you see this item in the New York Times the other day?" he demanded. Drawing a clipping from his pocket, the Doctor read—

"'Crows are stealing so many golf balls at the Taconic Club in Williamstown that some players carry shotguns. N. Henry Sabin, president of the club, favors offering a bounty for every crow killed. Large flocks swoop down on the course from Greylock Mountain and snatch only the high-priced balls!"

"But what about the flapidoodle-doo?" asked Criticus.

"I've no doubt it is a well known species in parts of the world you have never had the good fortune to see," replied the Doctor. "The boy has a vision that is lacking in others."

"Of course there are flapidoodle-doos," said Tittivillus warmly, encouraged by the Doctor's support. "In fact certain evolutionists claim that they are the ancestors of the modern flapper. They base their assertion on the fact that each, in its way, possesses an intoxicating quality."

"Enough boy," cried the Doctor. "Back to your dusting. I retract my statement. You show dangerous symptoms of justifying the worst suspicions of Criticus."

—THE LIBRARIAN.

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